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## Contents


EDITORIAL PARAGRAPHS ..... 253

EDITORIALS:

Jim Reed and Al Smith ..... 256
Japan's People Vote ..... 257
Yosemite's Trees ..... 257
New York "Homes" ..... 258

IT SEEMS TO HEYWOOD BROUN. By Heywood Broun ..... 259

WITH SANDINO IN NICARAGUA—III. ON THE TRAIL OF SANDINO. By Carleton Beals ..... 260

PAN-AMERICANISM IN ACTION. By Lewis S. Gannett ..... 262

MUSSOLINI AND THE MAFIA. By John Di Gregorio ..... 263

COVERING WASHINGTON. By The Unofficial Spokesman ..... 265

WHEN PROPERTY IS NOT SACRED. By A Chicago Journalist ..... 268

IN THE DRIFTWAY. By the Drifter ..... 269

CORRESPONDENCE ..... 270

BOOKS, MUSIC, PLAYS:

To a Modern Girl. By Witter Bynner ..... 271
History by Analysis. By Jacob Zeitlin ..... 271
Young China's Bible. By Lewis S. Gannett ..... 271
Historian of Our Stupidity. By Eliseo Vivas ..... 272
Procopius of Palestine. By R. F. Dibble ..... 273
Books in Brief ..... 274
Music: Mr. Horowitz and Others. By Henrietta Straus ..... 275
Drama: The Oldest Profession. By Joseph Wood Krutch ..... 276

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SECTION:

The Polish Election. By William Zukerman ..... 278
Where China Conquers. By D. M. Fraser ..... 280



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SECRETARY HOOVER celebrated his formal entry into the Presidential race by answering Senator Borah's prohibition questionnaire thus: "I do not favor the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. I stand, of course, for the efficient, vigorous, and sincere enforcement of the laws enacted thereunder. Whoever is chosen President is under his solemn oath and duty to pursue this course." He evaded the question which was the very heart of the questionnaire, namely, whether he favors modification of the Volstead Act. Again what does he mean by "efficient, vigorous, and sincere enforcement"? Does he believe that there is efficient, vigorous, sincere enforcement at the present time or not? Mr. Hoover ought to be too much of a man to indulge in such evasion. But candidacy makes cowards of us all. A questionnaire of much more importance and appropriateness would ask Mr. Hoover how he stands on the issue of corruption. He indorses the Coolidge policies. Would he have Mr. Doheny into the White House for tea? Would he accept campaign contributions from Blackmer and Sinclair? Does he approve the failure of the Department of Justice to take a single step toward tracing the Continental Liberty bonds? Is he in favor of seating Smith and Vare? Does he believe the investigations of the power trust and the aluminum monopoly should have been shelved? Does he stand for further reductions in the taxes on incomes of $1,000,000 a year and over? Secretary Hoover would, to use Mr. Coolidge's felicitous phrase, contribute greatly to the candor of the situation by answering these.

> "W. J. B.," as the Burns detectives call him, was seated in one of the jury boxes. His face was a study, the ruddiness, always under normal conditions conspicuous, was gone. His face was as pallid as that of his son. Nervously the older man fingered his short, gray mustache. . . . In a voice that quavered with emotion and a tone so loud that it could be heard in the corridor outside, Burns declared his innocence. "Before my God, I am innocent as a child unborn."

THUS, MELODRAMATICALLY, William J. Burns, when sentence of fifteen days was passed upon him for contempt of court in "shadowing" the Sinclair jury in Washington. The great man who has sent so many men to jail, and as head of the Secret Service during the war persecuted thousands with complete ruthlessness, was found guilty by Judge Siddons, together with his son, and Henry Mason Day, and Harry Sinclair, who received a penalty of six months in jail. Pleas by his counsel that Sinclair did not know that it was an offense to "shadow" the jury the judge overruled. No such plea could be made for the Burnses; they had "shadowed" juries before. Are they now sitting in jail? They are not. They are rich men and they have now appealed from Judge Siddons to the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, and they will appeal, if necessary, to the Supreme Court of the United States. Sinclair is already appealing from one sentence of three months and the papers say it will be a long, long time before he is actually in the grip of the law. None the less, we are grateful for this verdict and what it connotes. But we have not changed our belief that in all such contempt cases there should be a jury trial and not merely a judge deciding how far his own sacred judicial majesty has been impaired.

CONDITIONS IN THE PITTSBURGH coal region are "a blotch upon American civilization." Modern pigpens are better than the squalid hovels in which the miners dwell close to Secretary Mellon's home town. Statements like these are familiar to some of our readers; they are new from the mouths of United States Senators. A committee headed by the standpat Senator Gooding of Idaho as chairman, and including also Senators Wagner, Pine, and Wheeler, made these statements as it emerged from Pennsylvania into Ohio. They had but to scratch the surface to uncover the running sores of the medieval baronies of the coal region. In Rossiter they learned of the injunction which prevents miners from singing hymns on the property of a Magyar church which overlooks the coal mine. "This is an absolute violation of the right of free speech," said Senator Wagner, and three of the Senators boldly entered the little church and, defying the injunction, exercised the constitutional right to sing hymns when and where one pleases. For lesser men, however, the Constitution of the United States


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is no protection in the coal towns. There serfdom and peonage prevail. The swinish squalor of the mine towns is only a part of the picture; the despotic control exercised by the companies over their subjects' lives is more significant still. They own the homes, the roads, the police. The committee discovered one town, however, where control was incomplete. There the corporation paid the sheriff $7.50 a day for each deputy on guard at the mine, but the deputies received only $6.50. The sheriff apparently did what the United States has thus far been unable to do: he proved himself stronger than a coal company. The Senators are advertising the shame of the coal counties, but they have more to do; that shame must be ended.

THE FLOOD CONTROL BILL has had many jolts and twists since Representative Reid first introduced it last December. However, quite the pleasantest shock came when President Coolidge most unexpectedly conceded that the federal government should bear at least the entire first costs of flood control for the Lower Mississippi Valley. Since last summer he has stubbornly maintained that in the interest of economy the flood-stricken States should be made to contribute to the cost of flood control. Even as late as February 22 the New York *Times* reported that the President still held this opinion and that a veto of the bill was threatened if it carried a provision for full payment of flood-control expenditures by the federal government. His concession, therefore, amazing and unexpected as it is, indicates that he has at least listened to the opposition arguments with an open mind and that, finding his earlier position impracticable, has been liberal enough to admit it.

THE FINDING of the Naval Court of Inquiry into the S-4 disaster was that Rear Admiral Brumby should be removed from command of the Control Force of the United States fleet because he "failed to contribute that superior and intelligent guidance, force, and sound judgment expected from an officer of his length of service, experience, and position" in directing salvage operations for the submarine S-4. Which, in our opinion, is putting the matter very nicely and with a mildness by no means warranted by the circumstances. When questioned about submarine construction, about salvage, about rescue work, about the particular history of the S-4—about almost anything, indeed, even remotely connected with submarines, Admiral Brumby was compelled to answer feebly that he "did not know," he "was not sure," he "had left that to the young men in charge." Without him the navy will be a safer place. But the rest of the naval court's report, that Commander Jones of the S-4 and Lieutenant Commander Baylis of the Paulding—the destroyer which rammed the submarine—were jointly to blame for the accident which resulted in the loss of the S-4 and her crew, has already been challenged, especially by the Treasury, to whose Coast Guard service the Paulding belongs.

THE SENATE has passed a bill providing for the return of enemy alien property seized by the United States during the war. This is another step toward clearing our national name of a blot. The measure passed by the Senate is somewhat different from that approved by the House, the Senate providing for compensation payments to Austrian and Hungarian as well as German nationals, and adopting Senator King's amendment requiring the payment of 5 per cent interest on $25,000,000 of accumulated interest on German property now held by the Alien Property Custodian and designated by the Senate as part of the fund for the liquidation of American private claims. The bill also provides for compensation for German ships, radios, and patents seized by this Government, but there is no possibility of weighing the wrong done by the sale of the most valuable German patents to the American chemical trust. That act, we were told, was necessary if we were to come out of the war chemically independent of our former enemy. As Senator Copeland pointed out in an excellent speech in the Senate on February 21, those privileged persons to whom the German chemical patents were turned over have had for two years the benefit of our high tariffs, embargos, anti-dumping laws, and investigations of foreign costs. The holders of these stolen patents have been unable to make a go of the business—there is not today a single plant turning out nitrogenous fertilizers. Now these patriots propose an alliance with the wicked Germans and the Assistant Attorney General, William J. Donovan, declares that this will be entirely acceptable to the Government!

THE KILLING IN NICARAGUA continues. The press reports, for instance, that a scout plane killed two with its machine-guns when it observed a small band east of Narajo. To other airplanes a captain signaled that he had killed two members of a band that he had encountered, and a Lieutenant Shiebler surprised a "small party" six miles from Homonico and wounded several of them. It is also stated that if the marines do not "clean up" Sandino very soon the rainy weather will defer operations from three to four months. So the great United States Government, headed by such Christian gentlemen as Calvin Coolidge and Frank Kellogg, continues to let its men shoot down anybody they meet, or see and judge to be "bandits" when they are flying well above the jungle. Messrs. Coolidge and Kellogg have taken no note of Sandino's peace terms offered through Carleton Beals of *The Nation*. Indeed, the United States Government is not able, apparently, for all its marines, to communicate with this "bandit" and negotiate with him. It has neither the enterprise nor the simple common sense of a weekly journal in New York.

THOSE RUSSIANS have been at it again. The Soviet observer at the Geneva Security Committee meeting, Boris Stein, had the impudence to resubmit the Soviet proposal for speedy and practical disarmament, beginning with the reduction of all armed forces by 50 per cent, the destruction of arms and munitions, the stopping of all military and naval construction, the disarmament to be completed in four years, after which there will be nothing but police and frontier guards and such left. This time the usual course of sneering at the insincerity of the Russians, or denouncing the proposal as a trick was not taken. Instead, Mr. Stein was instructed to transmit his proposal to the secretary of the League of Nations. The New York *Times* correspondent reports that there can be no doubt that the Soviet leaders are "honestly anti-war." Other correspondents report that there is enough in the Russian scheme to prevent its being sidetracked when the Preparatory Disarmament Commission meets on March 20. They report also that "the establishment of neutralized, demilitarized land zones, the abolition of nationalistic, militaristic teachings, and the plans for the assimilation of disbanded military staffs, are regarded as

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practicable." In addition, the Canadian commissioner to the Geneva Security Committee, Walter Riddell, has joined the Russians in urging immediate disarmament as "more effective at the present moment in advancing security than pledges of armed assistance."

ITALY IS SECRETLY ARMING HUNGARY. According to the Treaty of the Trianon Hungary has no right to import arms, but the Interallied Control Commission has been withdrawn, and Italy is eager to build up a new military ally against Austria and Jugoslavia. The Council of the League of Nations has the duty of supervising enforcement of the treaty, but with Italy's influence thrown boldly into the scale against it, enforcement is doubtful. Apparently several trainloads of arms have gone from Italy to Hungary consigned as "vegetables" or otherwise falsified; but the decisive scandal occurred in January, when Austrian customs officials discovered five trainloads of machine-guns in a frontier station, falsely labeled and falsely addressed to Warsaw. Warsaw knew nothing of the consignment, but Budapest did, and the machine-guns were promptly moved out of range of Austrian protests. Inevitably the question went up to the League Council; and as we go to press it is still uncertain whether that body will lie down before the defiance of the Hungarian Whites, backed by Mussolini, or demand compliance with the treaty.

IN HIS DEBATE with Mrs. Bertrand Russell as to the canceling of her lecture scheduled to be given at the University of Wisconsin, it does not appear to us that President Glenn Frank comes off the better. As we understand it, Mrs. Russell was engaged by some undergraduates to speak on the subject of the protection of women, and when a synopsis of the lecture was received at Madison it appeared that it was so frank in its treatment of sex matters as to make the young men feel that they would be greatly embarrassed by any such discussion before a mixed college audience. Their decision, taken before they saw Mr. Frank, was approved by him. He felt that a mixed student audience was not the best place for discussion of her sex theories. Diplomacy might have suggested that Mrs. Russell be told of the difficulty and be given a chance to substitute another lecture. She declares that she had other subjects to offer; and that she had no intention of forcing her views upon anybody is shown by the fact that when her Madison meeting was finally held, off the campus, she limited the field of her discussion because of the obvious excitement and hysteria. As is always the way when authorities come out in opposition, Mrs. Russell and her opinions have been brought to the attention of thousands who would never have read her books or heard her lectures.

THE DAY WILL COME when discriminations against women will have vanished and special institutions for women will close their doors. But that day is not here. In the thirteen leading hospitals of New York City, public and private, only eleven women doctors hold staff positions. Women medical graduates are accepted as internes—although hardly on equal terms with men—but are shut out from later hospital experience. The only hospital to open its doors freely to women doctors is the New York Infirmary for Women and Children, founded in 1853 by Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, and since then run and staffed entirely by women. The need for such a hospital was, of course, more acute in her day—when women doctors were insulted and denounced and when women medical students were subjected to ridicule and physical violence by their men colleagues. But if the position of women doctors is better, they face a difficulty more serious, perhaps, than the barrage of rotten tomatoes that showered their sisters of the last generation. They face the apathy of a world that assumes too lightly that women have won the fight against inequality and professional ostracism. The trustees of the Women's Infirmary have announced that its doors will close on July 1; that the need for a hospital staffed by women is no longer serious enough to warrant the expense of maintaining it. The entire staff of the hospital and the Women's Medical Association have protested this decision. If it stands, a great loss will be suffered by the women of the country, and through them by the whole community.

YVES GUYOT, whose death at eighty-five is reported from Paris, was almost the last of a great European group of liberal free traders and sound-money men who fought a gallant fight against bimetallism and protection in Europe, winning one battle and losing the other. M. Guyot lived to see Europe divided by tariff walls as never before. The new states, rising out of the wreck and chaos of the war, saw in protective duties a means of defense against other nations and the easiest way to raise the large revenues they imperatively needed. Guyot's voice, and those of others who spoke with him, was raised against this folly, pointing out that those tariffs were the greatest stumbling-block to Europe's economic recovery and the source of further wars. In other fields this veteran writer for French and American journals was less sure and less clear. He, the arch-enemy of socialism, beheld socialist governments on every hand standing in the breach to save Europe from collapse. He found himself challenging in pure theory the new-found currency doctrines born of the war and was unable to accept the logic of facts which went contrary to theory. But he was a fine fighter to the end, a sturdy leader in France of the liberal free traders of the Manchester school, and the loss of his pen is a genuine one to economists everywhere.

THE DEATH OF MILDRED ALDRICH in France is one more reminder of those remote days when the war was not yet a world war and when the quality of its stupendous drama overshadowed its character and its significance for humanity. A veteran American newspaper-woman who had settled in France to enjoy her declining years in peace and quiet, Miss Aldrich suddenly found herself in the very vortex of a continental war. The dramatic scenes which she witnessed at closest range she described in a series of articles, extraordinarily moving and effective, which first appeared under the title "A Hill-Top on the Marne" in the *Atlantic Monthly*, and then became a book. This picture of the gray tides of war flowing in upon her from all sides remains one of the permanent literary accomplishments of the war. Miss Aldrich wrote other books and articles upon the struggle as it seemed to an American woman, but nothing equaled these spontaneous pictures of what the world appeared to be when in the twinkling of an eye the most gigantic and unexpected of catastrophes burst over her. To her literary skill she added personal devotion to her ruined neighbors, who thus also have an admirable reason for remembering her.

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# Jim Reed and Al Smith

AS a candidate we are for Senator James A. Reed of Missouri and would rejoice should he be nominated for the Presidency by the Democrats. He is Wet, and we lean the other way; he is an old-fashioned Democrat of the vintage of 1893, and we have accepted new conditions and new ideas. He opposes federal supervision of everything, and we believe a lot of it is inevitable. He is for the navy, we against it. But we waive all these and other differences and say wholeheartedly that if Senator Reed should be nominated and should talk on the stump as he is talking now the country will be in for the finest educational campaign it has had since 1912. In a day when almost all our dailies have abdicated the critical function in their editorial columns, when we have been told that we must not criticize the President because he happens to be President, it is refreshing and inspiring to have one man willing to stand up and tell the truth, to be brutally frank, and to go for the rotten Republican Party and handle it as it deserves to be handled.

Of course, it will be deplored that any man should use such severe language; the stale, old, false argument that such criticism is purely destructive and not constructive will be trotted out against Mr. Reed by those who approve of the present era of corruption in public life and in certain business quarters, or by those who do not wish to have corruption exposed. Nonsense! What the hour calls for, as it did in 1924, is a prosecuting attorney, some one who will go for the crooks hammer and tongs and demand of the public that it drive the rascals out. The mere prospect of Jim Reed loose on the stump as the Democratic candidate would scare the Republicans half to death. Hoover would almost decline the nomination if he knew that he would have the Missouri Senator on his trail for four months describing him daily, as he is now doing, as "Sir Herbert Hoover, that great British statesman." That is unfair, of course. Yes, but the situation calls for a man of flaming words who can blister and sear and excoriate with the wrath of a just indignation. It is a fine thing for the country, if not for the smug occupant of the White House, to have Mr. Reed pointing out on his present speechmaking tour that Mr. Coolidge has never said one word in deprecation of the oil scandals and has "remained as mum and inactive as a Boston oyster stranded on the beach in the month of August"; that he retained Daugherty in his Cabinet until compelled by public opinion to force him out; and that he has retained Mellon in his Cabinet, although Mellon's appointment to it was plainly in violation of law.

It is the more proper that Mr. Reed should speak thus because the latest revelations in the oil inquiry show that Calvin Coolidge was one of the two indirect beneficiaries of the Continental oil scandal. The 1920 Republican campaign deficit was paid off in part with Liberty bonds derived from the fly-by-night Continental Trading Company, which came into being for a day only, but made a profit of $3,000,000 during its brief existence. We assume, of course, that Mr. Coolidge knew nothing of this transaction at the time. But the very fact that it is now known that the campaign managers who elected him sought and took money to meet their deficit from the men to whom the Harding Administration corruptly sold the naval-oil lands makes it incumbent on the President to say something and say it quickly, before he is goaded to it by Mr. Reed and others. An honorable person of fine and sensitive feeling would not have hesitated one moment to declare that he desired the matter probed to the bottom; that he approved what the committee was doing and wished the campaign managers called to testify to the whole truth. The fact that he is the head of the Republican Party makes it his moral duty to demand that the party purge itself now or never, and make a clean breast. Since the President remains silent, Mr. Reed is eminently justified in scoring him. It is a duty to the good name of the Republic to do so.

We welcome Mr. Reed's entering into the Presidential arena because he is the only one of the candidates of either party who is dealing squarely with the public and is talking straight from the shoulder. Nicholas Murray Butler has again asked plaintively, this time of the Hudson County, New Jersey, Republican Committee, why we are "so patient with sonorous platitudes," and why "we permit our candidates for public office, even the highest, to be either without opinions or to content themselves with resounding phrases in undying support of the multiplication-table and the moral law." That is precisely the criticism to be made of Herbert Hoover at this writing. Indeed, it is the criticism that is now beginning to be made justly against Al Smith. That candidate must not be lulled into security by the rapid progress of his boom. It is by no means all over but the shouting, so far as his nomination is concerned. The very best thing that he could do to aid his candidacy would be to come out and tell the public what he really thinks about national issues and the kind of government that we have been having in Washington. We are heartily in accord with our contemporary, the *New Republic*, in its warning to Governor Smith that he cannot remain silent much longer. We were told last fall that he would not discuss national issues until the State Legislature met, and now we are told that he cannot speak until the legislature has adjourned. The people of the whole country want to know about this man, whether he is another pussyfooting politician or whether he has really something to say and proposes to say it; whether he will leave the multiplication-table alone and the Ten Commandments also. Governor Smith could do nothing better for himself than to take a leaf right out of Jim Reed's book. The last Democratic Governor of New York who went from Albany to the White House made that change in his residence because the people came to believe that he was honest, downright, hard-hitting, and willing to call a spade a spade. We believe that the people of this country are thoroughly sick of the bunk that is being talked by politicians, of the empty phrases and the careful concealments. For all their alleged fondness for the mythical Mr. Coolidge, they will rise spontaneously, we feel, to a man who will make it clear that he has convictions on every subject, that he is willing that everybody should know them, and that he does not care whether they make him votes or lose him votes. If such a man becomes a standard-bearer, we may be sure that something worthwhile will take place in this country next fall.

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# Japan's People Vote

JAPAN has just held her first general election under the new manhood-suffrage law, and although the result is not striking the event is itself dramatic. For the first time in one of the old empires of Asia poor men without property have walked to the polls and voted.

It is less than forty years since Japan hesitatingly adopted a constitution. It is not thirty-eight years since she held her first general election, hedged about with property and other restrictions, in which only 460,000 voters were permitted to participate. Compared with the slow history of expansion of British suffrage, Japan has been advancing with giant strides. The 460,000 voters had grown to 1,450,000 by 1918, when another reform bill doubled the electorate; in March, 1925, the bill which has just had its first trial was passed, and universal male suffrage—excluding only paupers and certain other small classes—went into effect. As in England's struggle to abolish the Lords veto, only the aid of the Mikado made this liberal bill possible. The Emperor prolonged the session of the recalcitrant House of Peers first one day, then two days more, then another two days, before it consented to pass the measure which made voters of 12,000,000 Japanese.

Enthusiasts may be disappointed that the enlarged electorate brought little change in the party representation. Governments control the election machinery everywhere, and they use their control in Japan as effectively as in the West. Japan has not yet thoroughly accepted the principle of responsible government; a government may continue to hold office without a majority in the Diet, but the recent dissolution, provoked by fear of a no-confidence vote, was a tacit acceptance of the Western theory of responsibility. The Seiyukai, which had been in power since the banking crisis of last spring, had only 188 of the 464 seats of the old Diet. The Minseito, the chief opposition party, had 219 seats, and 61 were scattered. The Seiyukai, holding power, expected a smashing victory, but the result of the election is that the two parties stand virtually on a par with each other. A group of 20 "Independents," together with 8 representatives of the new proletarian parties, holds the balance of power. But governments in Japan have facilities for winning the support of "Independents."

Political parties in Japan, as in the United States, have had little to distinguish them. There is a tradition that the Seiyukai represents the large landed interests, and the Opposition the business interests of the cities. But the Seiyukai election funds this year are supposed to have been received in large part from the steel companies, which were assured of comfortable protection for their products. The Seiyukai, when in opposition, denounced the dilatory Chinese policy of the former ministry, but its own "Positive Policy," after a little preliminary blustering, simmered down to something very like that which it replaced. The Opposition charged the Seiyukai with incompetence in handling the financial situation, but it had thoroughly demonstrated its own incompetence before resigning a year ago. Its most eloquent plea was against the Government's abuse of its power to influence the elections.

Opposition meetings were broken up during the campaign; censorship shut off too outspoken criticism; and bribery seems to have been applied upon a vast scale—Japan has always been expert at copying the follies of the West. But the sharp denunciation of these tactics by some of the powerful Japanese newspapers, such as the Tokio *Asahi,* marked a new stage in the development of Japanese democracy; and the fact that common workers participated, even if no more intelligently than propertied voters, at a national election, marked another advance. The little group of eight representatives of proletarian parties is the most interesting outcome of the election. Readers of *The Nation* know with what elaborate attention the Japanese Government has supervised the operations of these working-class parties. The working-class parties were split into five groups, but they polled 447,000 votes. Their very existence is a triumph. If the leaders of these parties carry on with the idealistic spirit of their founders they will introduce a new seriousness into Japanese parliamentary debate. Japan's is a volcanic climate; her people are impulsive; her industrial and social status is more like that of 1917 Russia, where large-scale industry abutted on a medieval peasantry, than that of any other great country in the world today; and the result will be worth watching.

# Yosemite's Trees

A THOUSAND years before Genghis Khan's hordes swept west from Asia, in the days when Jesus of Nazareth was preaching His gospel in Galilee, the sequoias of the Yosemite Valley were already big trees. They have towered skyward for three thousand years—and now they are being cut for lumber. They can still be saved—if the American people and Congress care enough.

The Yosemite National Park is not a solid block. The rectangular area marked on the maps includes several thousand acres to which private lumber interests still have a legal claim. The National Park Service, which owns several outlying tracts of forest land, is attempting to "consolidate" the park property, and it has reached an agreement with the lumber companies to exchange lands inside a concentrated park area for others which it regards as less desirable. Doubtless it has acted with the highest intentions; but the result of its bargain is that, unless Congress acts at once, some of the finest sugar-pine forest on the continent, and some of the few surviving giant sequoias, will be lost forever. At the highest estimate, lumber worth less than $200,000 is involved. The money could be replaced; the trees never can.

It seems mere cussedness to cut the giant trees of the Yosemite. Their timber, unlike that of the coast redwood, is coarse-flaked and not particularly valuable. The sugar pines—"the noblest pine yet discovered"—are better wood and younger; it takes only a few centuries to grow a sugar pine to maturity! But none of them can ever be replaced within the lifetime of the grandchildren of the present generation. Sequoias once stood in a proud belt that crossed the Arctic Zone to Spitzbergen, but before man appeared upon this earth they had been reduced to a million and a half acres upon the Pacific Coast, mostly of the lesser redwood. Puny creature that man is, he has felled the best half of that mighty forest, and year by year he is eating into its remainder.

"The forests of America," John Muir once wrote, "must have been a great delight to God; for they were the best

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He ever planted. The whole continent was a garden, and from the beginning it seemed to be favored above all the other wild parks and gardens of the globe." And it was upon the Pacific Coast that this American forest garden reached its mightiest beauty. The cedars of Lebanon and the deodars of the Himalayas seem poverty-stricken beside the glorious pines, the silver firs and sequoias, kings of their race, of our own Pacific Coast. The savage Indians did those towering forests no harm. But the puny white man, with his saw-mill civilization, has toiled to turn them into a desert. He is still at work. Even the templed beauty of the Yosemite Valley is no protection to its trees. We are the richest country in the world, but we haggle and barter and swap big trees with the lumbermen. In France no forest land has been sold merely for profit since 1870; Japan treats her forests with more respect than we. We chop and saw, and cut forest patriarchs into shingles and doll's furniture, and call it progress.

It is time for a new John Muir. Thirty years ago, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, he pleaded for the trees he loved, and, with Roosevelt's aid, won a first battle for the Yosemite. His appeal is as eloquent and valid today; are our ears deafer?

> Any fool can destroy trees. They cannot run away; and if they could they would still be destroyed—chased and hunted down as long as fun or a dollar could be got out of their bark hides, branching horns, or magnificent bole backbones. Few that fell trees plant them; nor would planting avail much toward getting back anything like the noble primeval forests. During a man's life only saplings can be grown, in the place of the old trees—tens of centuries old—that have been destroyed. It took more than three thousand years to make some of the trees in these Western woods—trees that are still standing in perfect strength and beauty, waving and singing in the mighty forests of the Sierra. Through all the wonderful, eventful centuries since Christ's time—and long before that—God has cared for these trees, saved them from drought, disease, avalanches, and a thousand straining, leveling tempests and floods; but He cannot save them from fools—only Uncle Sam can do that.

# New York "Homes"

LAST year fifty-three persons died in fires in "old-law" tenements in New York City. Even a minimum of fireproofing in the halls would have saved some of them. Only the undeserved mercy of providence has kept the acres upon acres of flimsy packing-box houses in Queens borough from a terrible conflagration. A year ago the situation from every angle had reached a point where it became necessary to appoint a commission to revise the present tenement-house law now twenty-seven years old—a law which never applied to all dwellings. This commission, which has just reported to the State Legislature, did a competent piece of work, as a result of which for the first time New York State has for its two principal cities, Greater New York and Buffalo, a fairly comprehensive building plan.

This plan provides, for new dwelling-houses of every sort, a far greater measure of fire protection, sanitation, and light than has heretofore been required. While it is impossible to undo the mistakes of the past the proposed law compels owners of converted dwellings to make minimum changes that would undoubtedly add to their safety; it gives even to the dwellers in the "old-law" tenements the poor boon of some additional fireproofing, and it ends those pestiferous disgraces, the yard toilets. One of the soundest features of the bill is the division of land in Greater New York into two classes according to its present value. The high-value land is permitted to have higher and deeper apartment buildings than the low-value land. By this limitation on the use of land not yet heaped up with buildings, the city of New York may be spread out without increasing the congestion which puts so great a strain on transit, sewage, and every other facility.

At the hearings on this proposed law in Albany mild-mannered representatives of tenants' leagues and social workers argued for the bill. More vociferous delegations represented the real-estate interests. Among these was one group interested in new buildings for the well-to-do and rich, who sought to throw dust in the eyes of the legislators by talking piously about the additional costs the bill would create for housing the poor. A second and noisier group was composed of rooming-house keepers and the holders of small equities in old-law tenements. The nominal owners of most old-law tenements are indeed squeezed to the limit by the holders of second mortgages on their properties, but these tenements as a class have paid the original investment on them over and over again. When the now ancient and inadequate "new" tenement-house law was passed in 1901 it was hoped that these old-law tenements would soon be replaced by better dwellings. Almost a third of the inhabitants of New York City still live in them! The interest of this enormous mass of our population should outweigh the interest of the present holders of the deeds to such nurseries of danger, disease, and crime.

In a really civilized and intelligent community these old-law structures would be condemned, beginning with those which now have most violations accumulated against them. Even under our laws and with our courts it ought to be possible at a conservative estimate to get the people out of the old-law tenements within the next decade.

Of course nothing of that sort can be done unless other housing is provided at a cost which underpaid workers can afford. That is a problem no regulatory law can solve. In nearly two years the State housing law which was supposed to stimulate new building by limited-dividend companies has failed to bring into action one single new corporation. The Walker-Heckscher plan of which much was heard at the last election has also resulted in nothing but talk. We are increasingly of the belief that this vital question will have to be solved by municipal housing under a non-political housing authority. That issue, however, is not involved directly in the law now under discussion. The city authorities, for reasons of their own, seem to be lined up in opposition. They talk about home rule, but they do nothing.

If the masses of the people understood this bill and what it means, unquestionably they would demand its passage as a meager first instalment on that decent program of housing which is their right. So far neither of the big political parties nor any great newspaper has seen fit to try to arouse them. If they are not aroused we may have to record once more the melancholy fact that in our State capitals the voice of the property-holder fearful for his own interest even to the point of stupidity rings louder and clearer than the voice of those who demand a decent measure of safety, sanitation—and beauty—for the city's children.

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# It Seems to Heywood Broun

PROHIBITION, in its effect upon politicians, is worse than conscience. From Willis up and down not a single candidate has failed to weasel in some cowardly way upon the issue. Take, as the most conspicuous instance, the usually forthright Jim Reed of Missouri. He is quoted as saying: "I do not think the prohibition question ought to control the convention. The question is important, but it is largely a moral one."

Now what does that mean? If I am a voter anxious to have drinking made more easy, or even if I want it more difficult, how can I tell what Mr. Reed intends to do in the matter? To many Herbert Hoover has been crystal clear upon the matter and yet it seems to me that he has left some open corners in the field for speculation. It seems to him that prohibition is a noble experiment. He does not favor the repeal of the Volstead act or the Eighteenth Amendment. "I stand, of course," he declares, "for the efficient, vigorous, and sincere enforcement of the laws enacted thereunder."

"Efficient" and "vigorous" are strong words but even so they need a little tonic of definition. Mr. Hoover did have an opportunity to clarify the conditions by mentioning the present Administration of which he is a member. I would like to know whether Mr. Hoover feels that under Calvin Coolidge we have had efficient and vigorous enforcement. By using the present status as a tape line he might have given us a precise indication of his intention. He could have said: "I will give you exactly the same amount of prohibition as existed under Calvin Coolidge." Or he could have promised a little less or a great deal more. Then we would know how we stand. Since political positions are largely determined by public taste I am surprised that no Republican has adopted the attitude suggested here. "I'll do just the same as President Coolidge" has much to recommend it. Prohibition, present style, is popular. It should come close to pleasing every faction. For prohibitionists there are ringing words and promises and pledges. The Wets get gin and whiskey, ale and champagne. Why cannot we accept this golden age in which the partisans on either side are happy?

It would not be fair to say that Governor Ritchie has done much to dissemble his wetness and yet he has chosen to state his position in a sort of crossword puzzle. "Either the Volstead law must be changed or it must be enforced," says the Governor, "and I am convinced it cannot be enforced." However, this is at least as frank as much that has come from the most vigorous of the Drys. Everybody knows that Senator Curtis is in no way damp and at first glance his words seem ringing. In answering Borah he wrote: "I am heartily in favor of enforcing all our laws and I am opposed to the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment or the Volstead act."

That's fine, but Senator Curtis has not committed himself as to the manner in which he purposes to enforce this particular law. By now we know that prohibition costs money. I am not oblivious of the fact that it has put billions into the savings banks and so on. I mean that we cannot have prohibition without heavy appropriations. In fact we can have just about as much prohibition as we want to buy. A few timid spirits have suggested that the amendment and its resultant law are not enforceable. Surely there is insufficient proof of this. Maybe we have been generous in setting up drying machinery but surely the Government has never yet proceeded with the last ounce of its power. The amount of effort put into the fight against rum is still insignificant as compared to the vast force which we exerted in the war with Germany. By mobilizing man power and conscripting prohibition agents there is small doubt that abstinence could be made to prevail. To be sure, there might be need of a sedition act to still the tongues of those who sneer at the Anti-Saloon League and in other ways give aid and comfort to the enemy. But that we can do. The trick of forcing public opinion into a single channel is not unknown to us. We have had experience. When next a candidate replies to Borah I hope he will be franker and not only give his opinion but also budget it. It is our right to know whether the prospective President favors ten-cent or ten-dollar prohibition.

It does not seem to me that Governor Smith has covered himself with glory in his recent public utterances upon the prohibition issue. For a man much given to plain and simple talk on public questions his present fogginess is almost disgraceful. In the case of other men it may be said, perhaps, that they never learned how to attack a problem except by stalking it Indian fashion and never coming out of cover. Smith has been better than that. Some have said that his present strategy is excellent. As one of the Democratic politicians has explained, "The Governor already has the Wet vote in his pocket; why shouldn't he go out now and make his peace with a few of the Drys?" To that I can only answer that it was not tactics of this sort which brought Al Smith to his present eminence. "I advocate," he says, "nothing that will infringe upon the provisions of the Eighteenth Amendment. It is nevertheless a fact that the definition of an intoxicating beverage contained in the Volstead Act is not an honest or a common-sense one." I don't think it is particularly honest either to snipe at prohibition from behind the camouflage of "beer and light wines." It would be interesting to take a census if ever the Volstead Act is modified enough to permit the legal use of these milder alcoholic beverages. According to my notion, the statisticians will find not one in ten of all the light-wine shouters actually consuming these commodities. Not all the hypocrisy now current can fairly be placed upon the shoulders of the Drys. It is no secret, I believe, that "beer and light wines" is merely a code for "heavy gins and satisfying whiskeys."

As yet Smith has made no very strong affiliation with the prohibitionists and he runs a chance of losing those of us who loved him for his wetness. Indeed it seems to me as if I may be able to stay away from the polls this year with small compunction. You see I'm waiting for a candidate who will say: "If elected President I shall make no attempt to enforce the prohibition amendment. I believe in nullification." Such a candidate would deserve the votes of all the Wets and he might even get the ballots of some Drys who would say, "Well, here, at least, is an honest man."

HEYWOOD BROUN

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# *With Sandino in Nicaragua*

## III.

# On the Trail of Sandino

By CARLETON BEALS

*(Via Tropical Radio Telegraph Company)*

*Bluefields, Nicaragua, February 27*

OUR Odyssey had begun. From the San Pedro ranch, the point where our connections with the next Sandino outpost were broken and we lost track of the route taken by General Sandino after his evacuation of El Chipote, our way led us even deeper into the mountains in an ever-widening inland circle about the scene of operations of the American marines. On every hand loomed height after height, crags and ridges, profound valleys, enormous precipices, all blanketed with the most dense tropical vegetation. On some days the earth simmered under a hot, tropical sky; at other times it was almost invisible while tropical storms deluged it. These would have been difficult mountains to cross even if we had known the exact direction of the trail we had to follow in order to reach Sandino.

*Carleton Beals, sent by* The Nation *to Nicaragua, is the first foreign correspondent to reach Sandino. His story began in the issue of February 22. The fourth instalment, Sandino: Patriot or Bandit? will appear next week, and others will follow in successive issues.*

Immediately upon our arrival in San Pedro on that rainy night, one of the three boys of our host promptly set out on a two-hour trip through the rain with my flashlight and raincoat to where Father Don Y was located in a secret nook with the women of his family. By midnight Don Y arrived to talk with us. His uncle is a colonel in the Sandino forces and in charge of a nearby *reten,* so Don Y himself is not merely an ardent Sandinista but had direct connections with the Sandino forces—or had till this night. He read my credentials and was duly impressed. He promised to land us at Sandino's camp by two o'clock the following afternoon if we would follow a short-cut trail on foot.

On the strength of this promise we set out the following morning across Don Y's mining claim, over a pineclad ridge past well-timbered shafts. We were to be at Sandino's camp by two o'clock, so I left everything behind except my blankets—even my toothbrush. A sad error.

Shortly, we met two Sandino soldiers on the trail with rifles and red and black ribbons who almost took a pot-shot at us before discovering we were friends. They informed us that Sandino was now in El Remango, a lofty height directly back of El Chipote, and though we were close enough both to El Chipote and El Remango, the marines cut us off from both. To reach the latter without a skirmish meant fully two days of hard marching.

One of the soldiers, a stocky, moon-faced Indian, offered to serve as *chan* or guide as far as Zungano. So we plunged over a scarcely legible trail through mountains and jungle in a wilderness stricken with terror and starvation. Here and there we left blazes on the trees with our *machetes* in order better to find the trail should we have to return over it hurriedly. The Indian huts here had for the most part been deserted by the frightened inhabitants. We were told that not a living soul remained in Zungano; that there we would not find a bite to eat. From here on we were lucky to get a few *tortillas,* glad to roast green bananas or an occasional sweet potato. We sometimes got water from *bejucos de agua;* it came fizzing out of the cut stems as if from a soda-fountain tap. Then and later we slept either on the ground or on bunks made of rough branches. Once we slept on a *tobanco,* a sort of raft of hard branches slung up near the thatched roof, alive with unwelcome insects, where the camp smoke covered us with grime and made our eyes smart. The few people we met were all loyal Sandinistas, fleeing ever deeper into the wilderness in order to escape the dreaded *macho,* the hated American marine. Their homes were burned, their crops destroyed, their possessions smashed, but one and all vowed never to give up the struggle.

In little Mataguineo, a place I shall always remember because of the black, buzzard-like *macacalgas* screaming and circling about, we were told the marines had crossed our path just ahead at Zungano. This would naturally result in difficulties for my companions and might bar my own advance. But we also learned that the *reten* on the other side of Zungano was in charge of Colonel J. Colindres, one of Sandino's most trusted officers. We sent an Indian courier ahead with our letters to be dispatched by Colindres to General Sandino.

Next morning Colindres replied. Two soldiers and the guide, the last yellow from malaria, came with orders to conduct us to the *reten.* We slung our blankets over our shoulders and set out on foot. One of the two soldiers, Pedro Montoyo, viewed me with ugly hostility, mumbling something about "Yankees." He regarded me with a constant sharp glare from his black eyes that made me uneasy.

"Most of those who have wanted to see General Sandino," he said, "have wanted to ask him to lay down his arms, to let the marines remain in Nicaragua."

I assured him I had not come to offer Sandino advice of any sort, nor was it proper that a subordinate of Sandino's should concern himself with whom Sandino should or should not receive.

It so happened that Montoyo remained at my side clear to Sandino's camp. By that time he had lost every trace of hostility and had become my staunch, unquestioning friend. He was ever ready to skirmish for additional food supplies for me—sugar-cane, oranges, roots, berries. I

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learned a great deal regarding the commissariat of a Central American army. At times our forces looked like a walking sugar-cane field. Montoyo discovered my interest in flora and told me the name of practically every plant which I examined, together with its medicinal uses—*zorillas* root with its skunk-like smell for headaches (better the headache, I decided); *coyol*, an insipid fruit; *golondrina* for the eyes; *malba* for the kidneys; *dormilon*, the leaves of which closed tight at the slightest touch. Montoyo's information was mixed with much folklore and superstition. He told me of *recamotillo*, a plant that grows on the Atlantic Coast: "If you give this plant to a person one day after cutting he will die within twenty-four hours; if you give it to him a week after cutting he will die a week later."

The final approach to Colindres's camp was made at dusk by hacking an entirely new path through the dense iron wall of the jungle across a valley and a ridge but a short distance from the American lines. We dropped into a clearing where there were barracks harboring about thirty soldiers and a dozen camp *juana*, women who had attended to the cooking and washing at El Chipote. One of them, Theresa, a vivacious, slender girl with a little boy about five, was also bound for the camp and promptly offered me two packs of Camel cigarettes which she had taken from the body of a marine—rather a gruesome gift. She had been wounded in the forehead by shrapnel during an American airplane bombardment on January 14, and lifted the towel from her head to show me an ugly star-shaped scar over her left eye. She declared that Sandino in that attack had lost one man killed and another and herself wounded—a decidedly different story from the marines' report.

Here at Colindres's *reten* I had my first taste of passable food since the Englishman's at Las Nueces. Colindres, Sequiera, Don Y, and I all ate chicken, boiled potatoes, rice, and gravy from a common camp skillet, dipping them out with *tortillas*, since utensils were non-existent.

Colonel Colindres was a young, round-faced officer of heavy build who has served with Sandino longer than any other. He is a member of a well-known Liberal family and claims distant relationship with the Liberal presidential candidate of the same name in Honduras. While awaiting a reply from Sandino to his letter about me, Colindres told of the earlier stages of Sandino's career and his interpretation of events. "I worked alongside Sandino in the San Albino mines in Nueva Segovia some years ago," he told me. "Even then Sandino had ideas about freeing his fatherland from foreign control." He continued:

> We were with Vice-President Sacasa when he established the Government at Puerto Cabezas in December, 1926, and I was with Sandino when he fought his successful battles throughout the republic—in Yucapuca, Trinidad, and the more recent successful attack on Chinandega. Despite American support of the Diaz faction Liberal arms were everywhere successful because the country was overwhelmingly Liberal. Then one day American battleships anchored in port and three hundred marines landed without asking anybody's consent. Puerto Cabezas, the seat of Sacasa's Government, was declared a neutral zone. Everything became a neutral zone where the Liberal forces were successful. Sacasa was ordered to deliver his arms to the American forces, though to my mind Sacasa was the only legal President following the illegal coup d'etat of Emiliano Chamorro in October, 1926, when President Solorzano resigned and was driven out. Sacasa had to leave the country to save his life. Diaz was put in by American coercion and a rump parliament—and not merely a rump parliament either but a parliament containing many illegal members. When the marines appeared at Puerto Cabezas, Sandino was all for resistance, but Sacasa calmed him down. Thereupon Sandino, instead of delivering his arms, returned to the hinterland, into the mosquito-infested marshes where every drop of alkaline drinking water was obtained by digging wells and straining out the mud. He secured some 25 Indians to carry what he had salvaged to Prinzapolka. From there he made his way with untold hardships up Cabo de Gracias and with a small group ascended to Rio Coco mountain in Nueva Segovia. When the Stimson-Moncada agreement was made at Tipitapa, Sandino disbanded his troops but refused to deliver his arms. After thoroughly acquainting himself with the terms of the agreement he reached the conclusion that it represented not only the betrayal of the Liberal Party but the betrayal of the Nicaraguan people. So he raised the banner of revolt in Nueva Segovia, where he has remained under arms for nearly nine months. His experiences at Puerto Cabezas with the marines gave him the firm conviction that the first duty of a patriotic Nicaraguan was to establish his country's sovereignty in the face of the world and make foreign invasion impossible.

I shall consider Colindres's statements in a later article.

The reply from General Sandino to Colindres arrived at the *reten* by Indian courier:

> *January 28, 1928*
>
> DON JUAN J. COLINDRES,
>
> ESTEEMED FRIEND: I received your little note in which you advise me that persons have arrived who wish to speak with me. You may have them proceed to the encampment El Remango. From there the gentlemen mentioned will be conducted by Captain Pedro Altamirano, who will take them to the place where I am to be found. Let their march be rapid in order to reach my camp soon. I greet you in company with your family. *Patria y Libertad.*
>
> Signed: A. C. SANDINO
>
> P. S. Have them come before the battle at Jinotega which we intend launching. Vale.

We broke camp early next morning and began our forced pilgrimage with Colindres's soldiers and *juanas* through risky country to Remango. We circled the *reten* El Retiro, where the marines were now burning the houses—smoke curled up grimly over the side of the mountain. Finally, on a late, cold evening, under a brittle, gray-green sky, we climbed up a bald mountain knob swept by a remorseless wind out of the great valleys beyond and below. Grinning rifles menaced us over log barricades tilting against the skyline. Red and black hat-bands, bodies crouching low, waiting. This *reten* is one of the key outposts. It is almost inaccessible to attack and had been held by Sandino since the beginning of hostilities. Its corrals were filled with animals—cows, pigs, chickens. A number of outhouses clustered around the main barracks. And here at El Remango we found Captain Altamirano and about seventy-five soldiers.

Captain Altamirano is a rough, middle-aged soldier who has fought all over Nicaragua and Honduras. He is ponderous, slow, and sure both in thought and speech. He was dressed in white flannels, a pink sash, and a lemon-colored shirt without buttons over which was criss-crossed a cartridge belt. Over one shoulder was slung a plaid cloth bag. His face was covered with a week's growth of beard. Here, too, was a column of thirty-odd men whom Sandino had disposed to accompany me to his encampment.

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# Pan-Americanism in Action

By LEWIS S. GANNETT

WHEN a railroad connects Hudson Bay with Punta Arenas, when a network of automobile roads carries tourists from El Paso through Mexico City to Managua and Panama, to Bogota, La Paz, Antofogasta, Sao Paulo, and Rosario, and when airplanes fly on schedule from New York to Santiago and from San Francisco to Buenos Aires, Pan-Americanism will be real. That day may come in ten years, or twenty-five, or fifty. It will come. But meanwhile, the French expect this year to open an air-post service across the South Atlantic; Buenos Aires is nearer Paris than New York; the United States is rapidly swallowing the Caribbean countries; and Pan-Americanism is something of a will-o'-the-wisp. Like the drifting mists of November it is there; but you never know quite where you can put your hand upon it.

What is Pan-Americanism? Why should the twenty-one republics of the Western Hemisphere bother to meet together? There is geography; but geography includes Canada, and "Pan-Americanism" does not. There is the republican form of government, but that is a mere form, veiling Mussolinian dictatorship in at least four of the richest American republics. There is the tradition of the struggles for freedom from Europe; but in the last quarter century the only threats to Latin-American independence have come from the United States, and the only war for freedom being fought today is waged against United States marines, in Nicaragua. There are the ties of commerce, but they work unequally. Mexico, Cuba, and Colombia do two-thirds of all their trading with the United States, but to Argentina and Uruguay trade with France or England is as important as trade with the United States. There is no Pan-American unity of race or language or religion.

Nevertheless Secretary Kellogg was right in saying that the Pan-American Conference was a success. It accomplished what it was intended to accomplish. There was nothing on the agenda to justify the concentration of world attention upon Havana; it was because the atmosphere was electric and a sharp challenge to Yankee prestige seemed possible that Havana held the spotlight. When the conference closed without such a bold challenge Mr. Hughes had a right to breathe a sigh of relief. He had done his job.

Thirty-odd conventions were signed at Havana. Most of them refer unsettled questions to future minor Pan-American conferences; but the sum total of these subsidiary conferences and organizations is impressive and must mean something. The Pan-American Sanitary Code adopted by the Seventh Pan-American Sanitary Conference was indorsed; so were the resolutions of the First Pan-American Red Cross Conference, of the First Pan-American Conference of Public Health Officials, and of the Second Pan-American Conference on Eugenics and Homiculture. Further Pan-American journalists' conferences were recommended; and suggestions were offered to the Fourth Pan-American Commercial Conference. A Pan-American Institute of Geography and History was created, and a Pan-American Educational Conference called for. So was an Inter-American Conference on Animal and Vegetable Quarantines, which may eliminate some of the friction due to the present arbitrary course of North American officials. The International Commission of (Pan-American) Jurisconsults was asked to consider regulation of traffic on international rivers; tasks were assigned to the next Pan-American Highways Conference, to the committees on a Pan-American Railway (which are to be reorganized), to Pan-American steamship experts, to the Second Pan-American Conference for the Simplification and Unification of Consular Procedure, to the Third Pan-American Conference on Uniform Specifications. The radio convention adopted at Washington in 1927 was indorsed; the Pan-American commercial aviation convention, also adopted in Washington, was modified, and Canada and other American territories not represented in the Union were invited to sign the new document. A code of private international law was accepted by most of the Latin countries; the metric system, a common monetary system, and legislation to protect pregnant working women were recommended; and it was agreed that the next Pan-American Conference should consider the protection of labor. Codification of public international law struck several snags, but texts dealing with the right of asylum, duties of neutrals in civil strife, maritime neutrality, treaties, diplomatic agents, consular agents, and the status of foreigners were voted—although the United States made reservations to several of these texts, as it did to the code of private international law and to the resolutions suggesting principles for control of immigration.

Individually these resolutions and references seem unimportant; together they indicate that impressive machinery is being built up, the basis of a continuing organism. Such a series of conferences must operate somewhat as does the League of Nations in Europe. It may fail to function in dramatic political crises and controversies, but it is constantly at work binding the nations together wherever they really have common interests. And since more than half the population of the Western Hemisphere dwells in the United States and vastly more than half the capital is concentrated here, such an organism is a potent instrument of Yankee influence.

No wonder, then, that the Mexicans wanted to reorganize the Pan-American Union, so that the governing body which directs the work of all these conferences would be less completely under the control of the United States. They did not propose shifting the headquarters from Washington, but the proposal was in the air. They did propose rotating the directing offices, which have always been held by United States officials, among the twenty-one republics. That proposal failed, but one step toward "disdiplomatizing" the Pan-American Union was taken. Hitherto its Governing Board has consisted, ex officio, of members of the Diplomatic Corps in Washington, who have to be accepted as *persona grata* by our Government before they enter upon their duties; hereafter the Latin governments may name anyone they wish. A modest change; but a step in the right direction.

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Whenever the conference touched politics it was mired. The Argentine representative wanted the preamble of the Pan-American Union to recommend lowering the economic barriers between nations. Forty years ago James G. Blaine, Yankee father of the Union, wanted a customs union in this hemisphere. Today that does not fit into the American political situation. Argentina being the only Latin-American country which finds our tariff a hardship, she stood alone, and the proposal, after causing a slight ruction, was dropped. Agreement was, of course, impossible upon intervention. Only the representatives of firmly saddled dictators like President Leguia of Peru and President Machado of Cuba could afford to countenance the principle of intervention; and Mr. Hughes was determined not to abdicate the unlimited privilege which the United States today asserts, of interfering wherever, whenever, and however our irresponsible Executive may deem desirable. Mr. Hughes's policy was one of conciliation without compromise; he smiled graciously, but he yielded nothing. The wonder is not that he won his point but that the Latin opposition was so weak. That lack of bold, forthright, frank challenge to our Yankee arrogance was in effect a negative confirmation of our self-asserted special privilege.

After the flurry about intervention the conference closed in sweet harmony. It accepted two aspiring resolutions. One provided for another conference to discuss compulsory arbitration, except upon certain reserved subjects; the other agreed to outlaw all aggressive war in this hemisphere. Since there is not likely ever to be serious international trouble except upon the reserved subjects, and since no nation has ever been known to admit that its war was aggressive, these resolutions, which provided beautiful texts for the closing anthems of friendship, are not likely to mean much in the world of international affairs.

Meanwhile Yankee capital continues to absorb the resources of Latin America and the marines police more and more of the Caribbean. Nothing happened at Havana to check those processes. The network of minor Pan-American conferences, centering at Washington, is likely even to accelerate the tempo. Thirty-three years have passed since Secretary Olney made his pronunciamento that "the United States is practically sovereign upon this continent and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition." Mr. Hughes has better manners than Mr. Olney, and all our statesmen have learned to make prettier speeches, but at bottom what Olney said is truer, far, today, than it was in 1895. And it is, probably, the essence of the kind of Pan-Americanism which has a future.

# Mussolini and the Mafia

By JOHN DI GREGORIO

THE world has been subjected to a flood of romantic news and laudatory comment on the arrest of a band of criminals in Sicily and their conviction by the Tribunal of Termini-Immerese, in the Province of Palermo. The Fascisti have exploited this episode to beguile the unwary into the belief that they have attacked, conquered, and forever obliterated an age-long evil peculiar to Sicily, an evil against which neither government nor citizen had ever dared to raise a hand—the Mafia. Mussolini ordered its extermination; Prefect Mori of Palermo accomplished it. So runs the Fascist legend.

The Mafiosi are not knights-errant or even Robin Hoods. Nor does any place exist for picturesque outlaws in our modern life. All sensible citizens would welcome their complete disappearance; but the credit taken by Mori and Mussolini and the praise lavished on them by the press for their prosecution of the Mafia seem in the light of the facts a bit absurd. This is not principally a prosecution of crime, but a persecution of recalcitrant rivals and political opponents.

It is, in the first place, absolutely untrue that the Mafia, or criminal element of Sicily, has never been prosecuted before. All governments, of course, proceed by spurts. Because of negligence or for purposes of expediency they let evil-doers largely alone during long periods, and then, for some reason or other, they wake up and start a campaign of purification. All cities and all countries have experienced such uprisings of governmental righteousness. Italy is no exception; from time to time her statesmen and police, after using the Mafia as a political aid and closing an eye to its criminal exploits, have suddenly recognized its existence and decided to clean out the miscreants and bag a few unfriendly folk in the bargain.

Mussolini is not the first Italian politician to go after the Mafia. Premier Crispi, in 1894, sent General Morra di Lavriano and Commissioner Count Codronchi and a large army to do away with the criminals, while in the course of sternly suppressing the famine and fiscal riots of that time. Both Mafia and socialism were declared dead—even as now—after this show of severity, but the only thing that relieved the situation was the wholesale emigration of Sicilians to America.

Nicotera, before Crispi, made a gruff gesture against the Mafia, and, reversing the latter's method, started to clean up ordinary criminals and ended by jailing his political enemies. And before that, soon after the annexation of Sicily by Piedmont in 1860, General Medici was given the formidable task of wiping out the ubiquitous Mafia; but he left things little better than he found them.

Even before the unification of Italy under the Savoy scepter, in the time of the Bourbons, efforts were made to root up the band. The memory of Maniscalco, unspeakable police chief and the Nemesis of liberals, Carbonari, and Mafiosi alike, still rankles in the minds of Sicilians. Evidently his labors were wasted, for the Carbonari ousted the Bourbons and the Mafia did not disappear. For all his inhumanity, criminals, singly and in bands, continued to crop up.

And now we have the grand show of Mussolini and his henchman, Prefect Mori. Mussolini at first tried to ally himself with the Mafia; then he split it, and conquered and annexed part of it; and later, true to form, he turned against unconsequential associates and the section that was still in opposition to him.

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In his fight against ex-Premier Orlando in 1924, Mussolini used and personally praised and rewarded those Mafiosi who, with the help of revolvers and similar electoral accoutrement, won seats for the Fascist candidates. Orlando, who had counted on the support of this same element, came out of the fray with only a part of his following and barely escaped with his life. Bullets from the "strong rurals," partisans of Mussolini, had missed him by a hairbreadth.

Prefect Mori, the man who is described in the newspapers as a pillar of strength and a paragon of duty, is merely a hireling who will go to any length to please and serve his masters. He always did his best, while he was a police official in Sicily, to procure the services of the Mafia, in order to make certain the election of government candidates. And it made no difference to him what sort of candidates they were: all men and all parties looked alike to him. His only concern was to do as his superiors told him.

When the Fascisti seized power, Mori was at first against them; but his career and his very job were at once placed in jeopardy. So he soon reversed his position, brought about the conviction of a dangerous rival, Dr. Cucco, Fascist lord of all Sicily, and became an instrument of torture in the hands of the black-shirted reaction.

It must be remembered that at the time of the March on Rome and after, many enemies of Fascism took refuge in Sicily and, together with the redoubtable islanders, started preparations for the overthrow of the new regime. Some Mafiosi, especially the rich owners of the latifundia (who are responsible for most of Sicily's criminality), quickly embraced Fascism and helped Mussolini, as rich people did everywhere; but the bulk of the Mafia never submitted to it. It is distasteful and unethical for a Mafioso to wear a uniform or a distinctive cap or shirt, or to carry a card that labels him a tool of the government, or to obey orders emanating from remote authorities whom he does not know and does not recognize. Furthermore, the Mafia saw in Fascism a rival; it understood that thousands of upstarts would claim the positions and the privileges it had held, and so it balked. Other people balked too; but the Mafia, from the point of view of law, was the most vulnerable group and therefore easiest to attack.

This lack of servility, nay, the belligerent hostility of most of Sicily, so enraged Mussolini that in 1926 he issued a decree "applicable only to the seven provinces" of the island, whereby anybody "suspected by public opinion" of being a transgressor of the law could be arrested and banished without a regular trial. And since the only "public opinion" having weight is that of the Fascisti, an army of citizen spies was created and a fearful weapon forged to send to the detention islands all enemies or suspected enemies of Fascism.

The vendetta was on. Mori had already arrested thousands of persons, mainly political opponents, on suspicion, and the infamous decree backed up his arrests. No proof of guilt could be found against many of the prisoners and none was needed. The authorities simply sent to jail or to forced domicile the men and women they wished to get rid of. Criminals and political offenders alike were assigned to the same barren and primitive places of banishment and treated with the same harshness. Ustica and Lipari swarmed with them. Once the steam-roller was started nothing could stop it. It crushed indifferently men of ideas and the Mafiosa, sixty-two-year-old "Queen of Ganci." As for the Mafia, some of its hapless members are in jail, but the causes which brought it into existence are untouched.

The Mafia is not a regular organization with written laws and elected officers but, like outlaw groups everywhere, it has a code of ethics and recognized and outstanding leaders. It has grown up as a result of economic and political conditions dating back to the earliest history of the island.

By a strange and persistent adversity of fate, the Sicilians have almost always existed under some sort of outside domination. The position of their island at the cross-roads of the Mediterranean Sea has made them, willy-nilly, hosts to various intruders and usurpers. Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Barbarians, Saracens, Normans, French, Spaniards, and North Italians have successively made themselves at home in Sicily and plundered it. While some of them left a little good in the wake of their bloody incursions, most of them caused only harm and resentment. Even after the annexation of Sicily by the Kingdom of Italy, during the more or less democratic administrations preceding Fascism, the Sicilians were despoiled and outraged. They often voiced their protest and contempt and commonly referred to the Italian Parliament as the "five hundred *ladroni*" (bandits).

Governmental tyranny in Sicily has resulted through the centuries in the rise of secret societies having the purpose of avenging wrong and establishing private justice; a state within a state, more powerful and often more just, although more crude, than the state itself. In the course of time habits of secrecy and of lawlessness became inveterate and degenerated. Brigands posed as avenging angels; to this very day there are people who insist that a real Mafioso will fight the oppressors and defend the weak and will take from the rich to give to the poor. This, of course, is sheer nonsense, made faintly plausible by patent misgovernment and inequalities. Still it enlists the support of the people and inspires *omertà* (manliness) or the principle of secrecy, so much affected by Sicilians. To be a *cascittuni* (informer, stool-pigeon) is the lowest degree of degradation among them. The ability to keep a secret and to scorn police and judges under the greatest duress is a badge of honor among all *picciotti*, or stout-hearted and right-minded men.

Taking the flourish, bluster, and glitter out of the whole matter, it must be admitted that the criminal life and spirit prevailing in a small part of the Sicilian population is due principally to poverty added to a long history of injustice. The working population, and particularly the great mass of lower peasantry, has always been kept in desperate straits. The peasants have worked like slaves, or actually as slaves, for centuries. Since the time of Rome most of the ten thousand square miles of land in Sicily has been exploited under the system of *latifundia*. The nobles, who have been and still are the absentee landlords of these huge estates, know nothing about agriculture and care less. They let their property to lessees who, in turn, sublet it, establishing thus a chain of leeches who suck the blood of the actual tillers of the soil.

The agricultural workers have no quarters on the land. Morning and evening they trudge along miles of miserable dirt roads to and from work. With their families they live in hovels clustered around a few old palaces, some churches, and a town hall. They work like beasts of burden from sunrise to sunset and at the end of the year they gather too

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little to pay owners, lessees, church, and government. It is the same from generation to generation. Poverty, poverty, poverty—from which there is no escape. It forms a high and thick wall that can neither be scaled nor broken through.

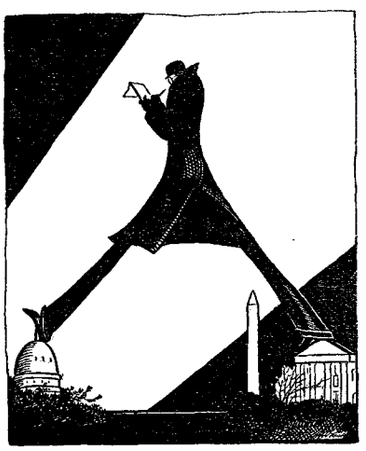
There is another category of people that are abjectly poor: the sulphur miners. In the interior of the island are some old sulphur mines still worked as they were in the Stone Age. The most unfortunate helots in the world work them from the time they are six until, haggard, stunted, and poisoned, they drop down. They are born poor and die in rags. They are bitter throughout life. When they are called to the colors, they don't go; they cannot go; they are not fit to go. Is it any wonder that some of the peasants and sulphur miners resort to a life of lawlessness to eke out a living? The crimes committed against them beget their own criminality.

Mussolini may, by bargain and barter, win over a few of the Mafiosi; he may arrest others; he will never, if he jails every known criminal on the island of Sicily, wipe out a spirit that breeds from the very heart of the feudalistic and Fascist systems—from the ruthless tyranny of the state and the helpless poverty of the masses.

# Covering Washington

The Nation's *Biweekly Washington Letter*

By THE UNOFFICIAL SPOKESMAN



*Washington D. C., February 24*

AT last Harry F. Sinclair and William J. Burns are well on their way to the common jail at which both are long overdue. Accompanying them is Henry Mason Day, Sinclair's international fixer and handy man. All of Martin Littleton's oratory in defense of the humble American citizen's inalienable right to hire a detective agency at $300 a day to spy on the jury which is trying him for a crime was unavailing. Six months for Sinclair, four months for Day, fifteen days for Burns, and a fine of $1,000 for his son, Sherman Burns, were the penalties imposed by Justice Siddons for the jury-shadowing plot which wrecked the Fall-Sinclair conspiracy trial last November. Aside from the dilatory character of the hearing, which consumed eleven weeks, perhaps the most extraordinary feature of the whole proceeding was the explanation made by the learned Justice of the light sentence given the elder Burns. His leniency was induced, he said, by Burns's extraordinary record as an upright and honorable man! Apparently he had never heard of the Oregon land-fraud case, in which President Taft pardoned a man after it was discovered that Burns had "fixed" the jury against him.

* * * * *

THE usual notices of appeal have been filed, but the prospects are not too rosy for Hard-boiled Harry. In this instance the respondents were sentenced for a contempt committed against the court which had sentenced them, and the reluctance of higher courts to reverse such cases is well known. The jail sentences now standing against Sinclair total nine months. He is under a three-months sentence for contempt of the Senate, having been convicted a year ago. That case also is on appeal. Retrial of the criminal conspiracy case against Sinclair and Fall is set for April 2, and if Fall is physically unable to appear, which seems likely, government counsel will move for a severance, and proceed with the trial of Sinclair. That prosecution has been rendered vastly simpler and surer as a result of the Burns-Sinclair jury-shadowing melodrama. The mistrial gave Senator Walsh time to get a bill through Congress depriving M. T. Everhart of the self-incrimination plea which enabled him to preserve silence in the last trial. Next time he will be required to testify that Sinclair sent $233,000 in Liberty bonds direct to Fall a month after the Teapot Dome lease was signed. Thus did the dunderheaded bungling of the oil magnate and his sleuths result in supplying the one missing link in the chain of evidence against him.

* * * * *

ANOTHER great oil baron who is being speeded toward a cell in the District of Columbia jail is Robert W. Stewart, chairman of the Standard of Indiana. His indictment for contempt of the Senate, in having refused to answer questions before the Walsh committee, is imminent as this is written. Meantime, Justice Jennings Bailey—whose promptness and vigor provide a welcome contrast to the methods of his colleague, Justice Siddons—dismisses the writ of habeas corpus on which Stewart had obtained his release from the custody of the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms, holds that Stewart was required to answer the questions, and characterizes his reasons for refusing as "frivolous." Again comes the inevitable appeal, and the inevitable release under bond. This case involves an important question, upon which there is no direct precedent. The Senate seeks to commit Stewart to jail and keep him there until he answers. Senator Walsh and the Senate's distinguished legal counsel, former Attorney General Wickersham, contend that the Senate can do this under its "coercive power," as distinguished from the "punitive power" of the courts to punish Stewart for his offense in refusing to answer.

* * * * *

ANOTHER block of the Continental Trading Company's tainted Liberty bonds turns up in the safe-deposit box of Harry M. Blackmer, whose flight to Europe to escape testifying had virtually convicted him as the possessor of

(*Continued on Page 268*)

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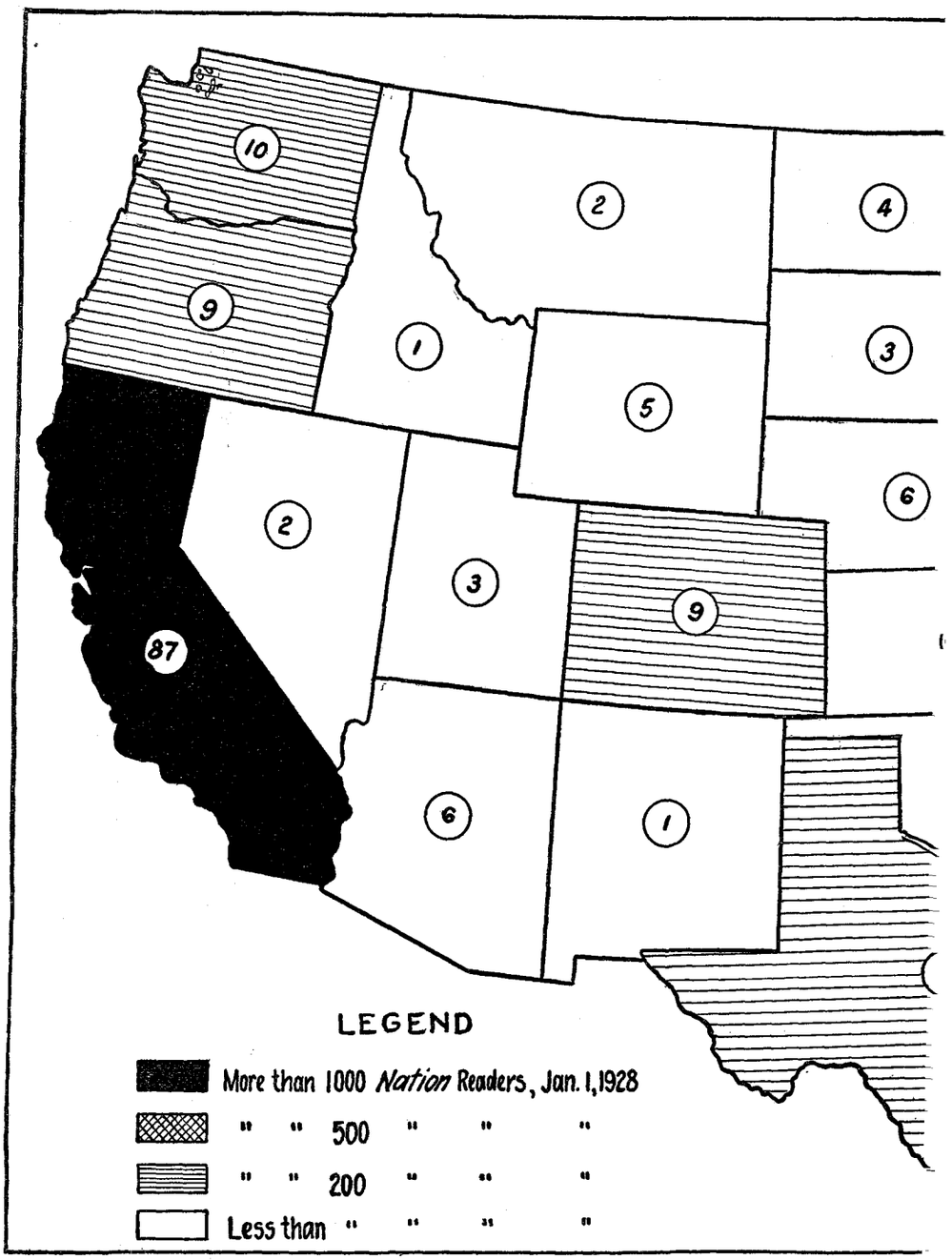
# HAVE YOU A FRIEND
in the
# "WHITE" STATES?—

It is a direct kind of service to people to introduce them to The Nation, if by some unlucky chance they have not met.

This week we suggest that all good Nation readers wherever they live should concentrate on those "white" States. Send a Tenth Anniversary gift subscription to someone in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah or Nevada.

If, with the best will in the world, you can think of no one in any of these States, who would accept such a gift, then send us your check (for $2 or $4), choose your State and we will send The Nation to some public library or newspaper editor of that State not now receiving it. This will count for the Nation Book exactly as though you had found the subscriber yourself.




# Watch our Birth

If, on the other hand, you are yourself one of the Nation readers in those "white" States, take this moment to do something for a friend, for The Nation, for your own state, and for America.

*Yes, for America.* It is no exaggeration to say that it would materially affect public opinion in America to get rid of those "white" States, i.e., to make sure that after March 13, 1928, there shall be no State in the Union with less than 200 Nation readers. 200 people hearing the truth every week represent a powerful bit of "leaven,"—even in a lump as large as Montana. As Henry Goddard Leach of The Forum says: "The Nation is America's outstanding champion of minorities. And it is to the minorities, the informed minorities, tha we must look if there is to be any real greatnes in America's future.

For the "third and last time," then, we urge yo to join the company of seriously devoted reade who have set out to give Mr. Villard ten thousan new subscribers in honor of his fifty-sixth birthda and his tenth anniversary as editor of The Natio

Yours faithfully,

*For the Tenth Anniversary Committee of Nation Readers*

JOHN HAYNES HOLME
ZONA GALE
CLARENCE DARROW

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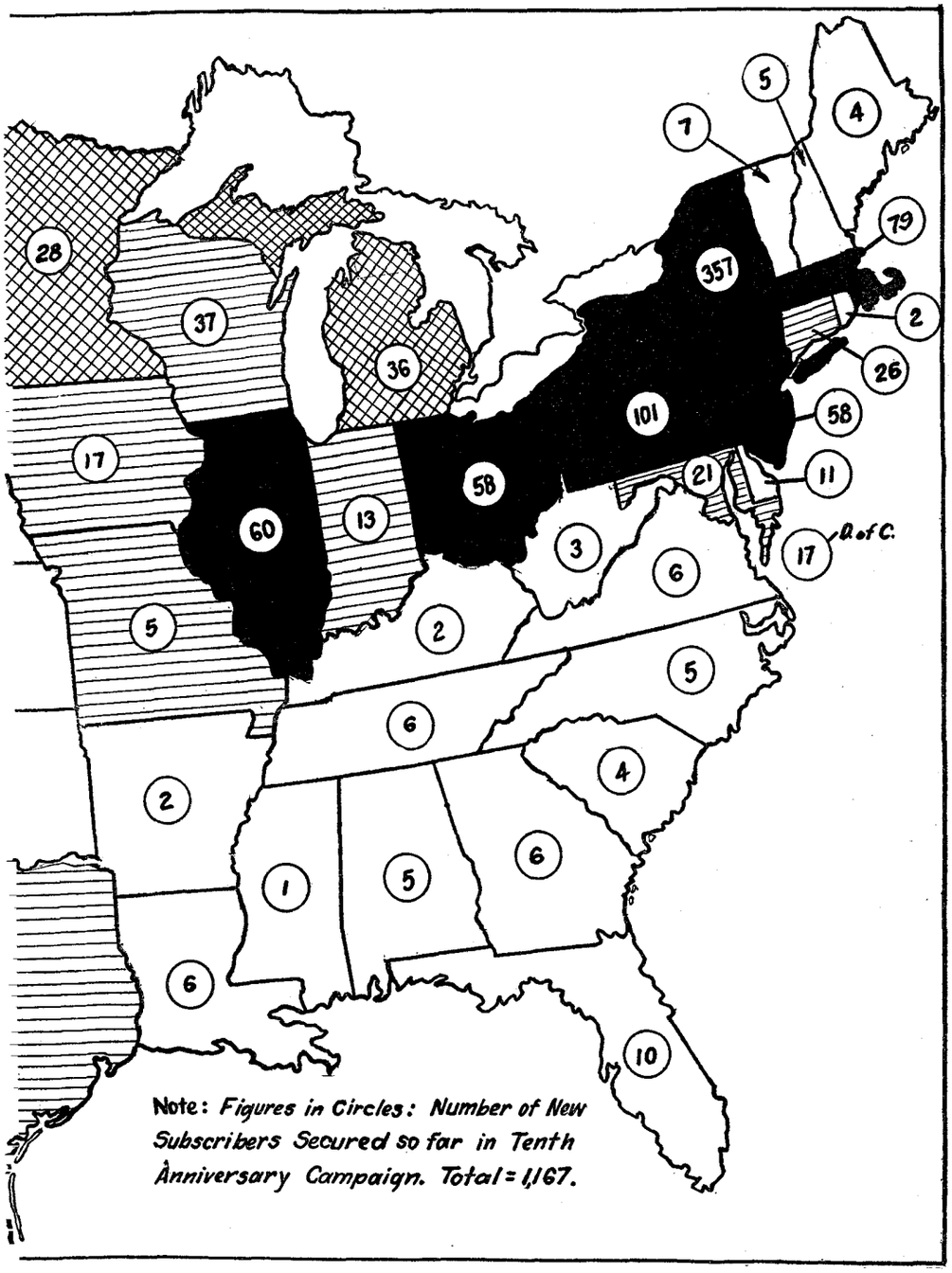


Note: *Figures in Circles: Number of New Subscribers Secured so far in Tenth Anniversary Campaign. Total = 1,167.*

# y Present Grow!

## A NEW DEADLINE—MARCH 10th

As most of you know, the Tenth Anniversary Committee is preparing a small, handsomely-bound leather-covered volume to commemorate this Anniversary. It will contain the most famous Nation editorials of the past ten years, a dozen cartoons, some crayon portraits of the editors, and, finally, the names of all those who have helped to make this Tenth Anniversary a success.

This book must go to press March 1st, but it will be possible, the printer tells us, to insert a few additional pages of names at the very last moment, just before the Book goes to the bindery.

"What do you mean by the 'last moment'"? we asked the printer.

"Well, let me see," he said. "You want one volume completed in time for Mr. Villard's Birthday Dinner on the evening of March 13th. Don't you? I tell you what I'll do. I'll guarantee to get in every name you give me up to March 10th."

This gives every Nation reader, even those on the Pacific coast, one last chance to qualify for the Nation Book. Let us repeat the conditions: *One new six-months subscription puts your name in the Nation Book. One new year's subscription, or two new six-months subscriptions, will mean that we can send you a complimentary copy of the Nation Book as soon as it is published.*

If, despite this ten-day respite, you do not find your new subscriber until the eleventh hour,—the 7th, 8th, or 9th of March,—remember the Special Delivery letter, the Air Mail, and the Telegram.

If you telegraph to us on March 10th that your new subscription is on the way with check to cover, we will take your word for it and put your name in the Book.

Crystal Eastman.

*Secretary, Tenth Anniversary Committee of Nation Readers*

*Tear off here.*

To the Secretary
TENTH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Here is one new Tenth Anniversary six months' subscriber. Please enroll me in the Nation Book.

Name .....

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TENTH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Here are two new Tenth Anniversary six months' subscribers (or one new yearly subscriber). Please enroll me in the Nation Book and send me a copy when it is published.

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them. Unlike his partner in that secret enterprise, James E. O'Neill, who made full restitution to his company, the Prairie Oil and Gas Company, of the share which he had received, Blackmer is described by his attorney as being determined to hold on to his share of the swag. Of the $3,080,000 in bonds which the Continental purchased, the following have now been traced: Blackmer received $763,000; O'Neill got a similar amount; $233,000 went to Secretary Fall; $75,000 was donated to the Republican National Committee to apply on the 1920 campaign deficit (the latter two items coming out of Sinclair's share), and $61,600 went to H. S. Osler for legal services and for acting as president of the Continental. This leaves undisclosed the destination of $455,000 which remained of Sinclair's share after his generous gifts to Fall and the Republican Party, and the full amount of the fourth share—about $760,000—which went to the mysterious fourth partner. There remains undisclosed, moreover, the identity of the fourth partner. It has been rumored that this partner was the Republican National Committee, and that the bonds were divided into blocks of $5,000 and $10,000, and contributed under various names. Perhaps the moral guardian of the movies, Mr. Will Hays, can answer that question. But will he?

* * * * *

LEST it be concluded that clean government is victorious on all fronts, let it be noted that the power trust won its fight against the Walsh resolution, and the investigation of the public utilities has been sidetracked to the Federal Trade Commission, presided over by William E. Humphrey, who was a lobbyist himself (for the lumber interests) until President Coolidge rewarded his public services by making him head of a government board to keep business straight. Senator George of Georgia, who signalized his announcement as a candidate for the Democratic nomination for President by leading the fight against Walsh, protests that certain contributions to his last campaign fund were inspired by the personal friendship of the donors, and not by the fact that they happen to be officers of the Georgia Power and Light Company. The most amusing aspect of the whole business is the expense and suffering which Samuel Insull endured in his futile effort to put Frank L. Smith into the Senate. Now it turns out that he did not need Smith at all—the power interests had a majority of fifteen votes without Smith!

* * * * *

SENATORS Walsh and Borah, acting as members of a subcommittee, recently have been engaged in exposing the character of one of the men who will conduct the power inquiry. Abram F. Myers was a young attorney in the Department of Justice until Harry M. Daugherty became Attorney General. Daugherty promoted him to a post of great responsibility. As an Assistant Attorney General, Myers made a deal with a combination of baking companies charged with violating the Clayton Act, and as a result of that deal the Continental Baking Company escaped prosecution. He presented to federal Judge Soper at Baltimore a consent decree which dismissed the case against the Continental on the stated ground that it was being prosecuted by the Federal Trade Commission. Myers knew that the commission had dismissed its complaint the preceding day. Myers says he gave Judge Soper that important fact. Judge Soper and half a dozen others who were present say he did not mention it. Meantime, doubtless as a reward for faithful service, President Coolidge appointed Myers to the Federal Trade Commission. To the accusation of perjury, Myers replies by shouting that Senator Walsh "has not a bit of fairness in him anywhere." Supported by this fragrant record, Commissioner Myers will now enter upon the stern duty of probing the power trust. Yet people still talk about poor old Harding's unfortunate appointments. The most respectable officials in the Coolidge Administration are those who were inherited from Harding. The worst are those whom Mr. Coolidge appointed—Kellogg, Myers, Humphrey, Wilbur, Sargent, Olds.

# When Property Is Not Sacred

By A CHICAGO JOURNALIST

WE Americans think these days in terms of billions, of gigantic enterprises, international deals of vast proportions, world problems of baffling complexity. A small raid on the part of a powerful and famous corporation passes unnoticed, a small gift to such a corporation from a mayor and city council at the expense of the community quite accustomed to spoils politics and administrative waste.

The theater of the little tale—or tragic farce—is Chicago, a city officially presided over by Big Bill, the superpatriot, the gallant foe of King George, the organizer of the America First Foundation, the bold champion—past, not present—of popular rights as against predatory public utility corporations and rich tax-dodgers. The characters in the tragic farce are Big Bill, the Aldermen of Chicago, the Daily Press, the City Club, and the Woman's City Club.

Curiously enough, the daily press played throughout the farce a part absolutely passive. It was conspicuous for its exceptional reticence, its aversion to publicity, its dense and oppressive silence. This fact alone makes the tale engrossing.

The plot is simple. The city of Chicago owned a short street or alley forty feet wide called Holden Court. This alley runs between State Street and Wabash Avenue, and from Madison to Randolph Street. It has been bridged over, for one-half of its length, by the great, prosperous, and popular corporation known as Marshall Field & Company, which operates the most celebrated and attractive department store in the world. In theory the little street is open to the public, but in fact few persons use or have used it in recent years. It had been leased to Marshall Field by the city for twenty years at an annual rental of $23,000, and the terms of the lease merely provided for a bridge over the street connecting two stores of the company.

The lease was made in 1912, and would have expired, therefore, in 1932. For some reason Marshall Field & Company decided to ask the city to vacate and surrender to it half the street—the half, naturally, that it had bridged

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over. It had, of course, a perfect right to propose the sale and purchase of Holden Court, and the city had a perfect right to accept the proposal. Accordingly, an ordinance was drafted and introduced in the City Council to effect the deal. The matter received little attention and little publicity, and the aldermen, apparently, did not court any publicity. However, when it became known that the ordinance provided for the payment by Marshall Field & Company to the City of Chicago of but $493,000 for the property, some citizen familiar with real-estate conditions, prices of land in the central district called the Loop, and with various precedents for the transaction sat up and took notice. They first of all demanded of the aldermen some light on the sale at so low a price. They found everybody in a position to give information on the subject extraordinarily shy and discreet. They ascertained, however, that a committee of appraisers appointed by the Real Estate Board had recommended the valuation in question. They ascertained, further, that seven of the fifty aldermen composing the City Council were firmly opposed to the ordinance and had steadily voted against its adoption. These seven dissenting aldermen were of the opinion that the price named in the ordinance was absurdly inadequate and arrived at by mysterious calculations and methods totally different from those approved by real-estate dealers and property owners.

One of the citizens who became interested in the deal was the president of the City Club, Ernest T. Gundlach, the head of an advertising firm and a man of affairs never suspected of communism, socialism, or insurgency of any sort. He appointed himself investigator, and, being a native and typical Chicagoan, soon realized that the unusual reticence of otherwise voluble persons was a bad symptom. He went deeper into the subject, only to be told that the affair was strictly private, and that no one wanted his name used in any muck-raking stunt. To his surprise, it was soon established by comparisons and record that the price of the property sold to Marshall Field & Company should have been fixed at about $3,000,000.

The City Club called a meeting, discussed the matter thoroughly, made a strong protest against the ordinance, and urged Big Bill, the mayor, to veto it. The Club had difficulty in reaching him but at last he was seen and informed of the facts. He promised to study the ordinance and the objections thereto. Meantime the City Club secured the cooperation of the Woman's City Club—a most independent and courageous organization—and together these civic bodies circulated petitions against the ordinance and distributed ten thousand leaflets in which the facts were briefly set forth.

The press, meantime, boycotted the whole subject. The City Club said on this aspect of the affair in a bulletin:

> For obvious reasons, the Holden Court matter received practically no mention in the newspapers; in fact, as far as our office could observe, this matter in its whole course occupied less than thirty inches of space in all of the seven Chicago newspapers combined—an average of four and one-half inches each spread over sixty days.

The mayor neither signed nor vetoed the ordinance. It took effect, and thus Big Bill saved poor Marshall Field & Company about $2,500,000.

Now the company did not impose silence upon the press. It neither threatened nor begged. These things are not done—today. Subtler means are used. The press knew that discretion would be appreciated by a big and generous advertiser. Editorially, the subject was not even alluded to, while the news columns managed to spare the thirty inches of space above mentioned.

Marshall Field & Company could well afford to pay a fair price to the city for the property. Several of the members of the corporation are multi-millionaires. Several former members retired with millions to their respective credits. Most of these are philanthropists. The city owes them much in the way of improvement and adornment. There is the Marshall Field Museum of Natural History, the to-be-built Shedd Aquarium, Simpson Hall, etc. But, somehow, property ceases to be sacred when a city owns it, and the pillars of individualist civilization become shaky and shadowy when a corporation that advertises liberally annexes something public for a song.

However, seven aldermen and two struggling civic clubs had the courage to stand up and denounce an injustice to the community in the teeth of hostility from the forces of big business, corporate privilege, official and press servility and cowardice. This is something to be grateful for, at any rate.

# In the Driftway

THE *NATION* had something to say in its editorial pages recently about tests for prospective immigrants and citizens. The Drifter has a story about that too. At an examination for citizenship the question was asked: "What flies over public buildings?" The answer intended was "the flag," but an Italian replied equally truthfully "Pigeons."

* * * * *

THERE are fundamentalists in China as well as in Tennessee. In a letter from Shanghai to a friend in this country an American missionary recounts the Chinese story of the Creation. The male and female principles, *yang* and *yin*, gave birth to Pan-ku, the first man, how none knows. He grew six feet every day and lived 18,000 years. Anybody who is good at arithmetic, or even merely guessing, can judge that eventually he must have been considerable of a man. In some way Pan-ku came into possession of an ax with which he managed to *kai-pih tien di*, or hew out the universe. He did this out of nothing, or out of chaos, thereby showing himself much more resourceful than most modern mechanics. He spent all of his 18,000 years at the job, and in order to finish it he had to die.

* * * * *

PAN-KU's head became the mountains, his breath the winds and clouds, his voice the thunder, his arms and legs the four quarters of the earth, his blood the rivers, his flesh the soil, his beard the constellations, his skin and hair the plants and trees, his teeth and bones the minerals and rocks, his sweat the rain, and (most suggestive of all to evolutionists) "the insects creeping over his body became human beings." In spite of his long life—or possibly because of it—Pan-ku failed to put the sun and moon in their proper places, and the two luminaries disappeared ignominiously into the sea, leaving the people in darkness. A messenger was dispatched to request the sun and moon to ascend into the heavens and give light. They refused.

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Then Pan-ku was called upon (the story tellers appear to have forgotten that he was dead). At Buddha's direction Pan-ku took the character *zeh* (sun) in one hand and *yuih* (moon) in the other. Then, going to the sea, he stretched out his hands and called the sun and moon, repeating a charm devoutly seven times. Thereupon the sun and moon ascended into the sky and have been giving light to the wicked generations of mankind ever since.

* * * * *

THERE were fifty-one stories to the universe as built by Pan-ku. Of these thirty-three were above earth, for heaven, and eighteen were below, for hell. The pick of mankind went to the thirty-third floor of heaven as their reward. Into the eighteenth level of hell went—but why elaborate an unpleasant theme? It is more comfortable to note that there were almost twice as many floors in heaven as in hell. Even in 18,000 years the work of making the world was not completed. A cavity was left through which many fell to the bottom. After a long time a woman, Nu-ku, was born. She took a stone, blocked up the hole, and so finished the work. A pretty story—credible as any.

THE DRIFTER

# Correspondence

## Peace

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: After reading your editorial The World Talks Peace I immediately hunted out my old gas-mask and gave it a thorough testing. I remember once before when people were talking peace, singing "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier," and electing a man President because he kept us out of war. Shortly after that they were reading "Over the Top" and singing "Over There." I recall that in both cases statesmen, churchmen, educators, and editors joined in a swelling chorus.

*Syracuse, N. Y., February 20* DALE A. HARTMAN

## The V. M. I. Carries On

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The recent recommendation of an educational survey commission of eleven outstanding Virginians that the State discontinue all appropriations to the Virginia Military Institute, on the ground that it devotes too much time to military affairs, as set forth in my article in *The Nation* for February 15, will not be enacted by the State Legislature at its current session.

I was definitely and finally informed today by the chairmen of the committees of the Senate and House of Delegates which have the matter in hand that both committees have shelved the bill, and that neither expects to report it out.

If "Stonewall" Jackson had not been a member of the V. M. I. faculty, and if the V. M. I. cadets had not done such excellent execution at the battle of New Market in 1864, the bill providing for discontinuance of appropriations to the institute might have passed. But the average Virginia legislator is swayed almost hopelessly by sentimental considerations, particularly where the Civil War is concerned.

Governor Harry F. Byrd's opposition to the measure also was an important factor in its failure. The Governor gave it as his opinion that the proposal was "not acceptable to the people of the State." He recommended instead that the curriculum be reorganized "to meet present educational demands." He took occasion at the same time to commend the educational survey commission for its "courageous frankness," and said he had no sympathy with those who criticized it because of its recommendations relative to the V. M. I. He doubtless referred to those who denounced the commission as "slackers" and "pacifists."

*Richmond, Virginia, February 21* VIRGINIUS DABNEY

## Contributors to This Issue

CARLETON BEALS, author of "Brimstone and Chile" and "Mexico: An Interpretation," has been living in Mexico City for several years. He was sent as a special correspondent to Nicaragua by *The Nation*.

LEWIS S. GANNETT, associate editor of *The Nation*, has recently returned from Havana.

JOHN DI GREGORIO is a frequent contributor to the liberal and radical press of the United States and Italy.

THE UNOFFICIAL SPOKESMAN is *The Nation's* Washington correspondent.

WITTER BYNNER, author of numerous volumes of poetry, lives in New Mexico.

JACOB ZEITLIN is professor of English at the University of Illinois.

ELISEO VIVAS is in the department of philosophy at the University of Wisconsin.

R. F. DIBBLE is author of "Strenuous Americans" and "Mohammed."

WILLIAM ZUKERMAN is a London journalist.


## MARCH 1st — MARCH 13th

*THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE OF NATION READERS ANNOUNCES THE FOLLOWING DINNERS, AT WHICH OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD WILL BE GUEST OF HONOR:*

*Monday March 5th* — in ROCHESTER, N. Y., at the Temple B'rith Kodesh, with Albert L. Stern presiding.
Speaker: Mr. Villard. (*Tickets, $1.00 each, can be secured from Temple Club, 117 Gibbs St.*)

*Wednesday March 7th* — in PHILADELPHIA, PA., at the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, with J. Henry Scattergood presiding.
Speakers: Congressman F. H. La Guardia, Freda Kirchwey, and Mr. Villard. (*Tickets, $2.50 each, can be secured from Miss Sophia H. Dulles, 1215 Guaranty Trust Bldg., 1420 Walnut St.*)

*Thursday March 8* — in WILMINGTON, DEL., at the Hotel Dupont, with Christopher L. Ward presiding.
Speaker: Mr. Villard. Public invited at 7:30.

*Friday March 9th* — in BALTIMORE, MD., at the Southern Hotel.
Speakers: Arthur Garfield Hays, Joseph Wood Krutch, and Mr. Villard. (*Tickets, $2.50 each, can be secured from Mrs. R. A. Spaeth, 807 Edgevale Road, Roland Park.*)

*Saturday March 10th* — in BOSTON, at the University Club.
Speakers: Henry R. Mussey, Lewis Gannett, George W. Kirchwey and Mr. Villard. (*Tickets, $2.50 each, can be secured from Mrs. G. L. Winslow, 6 Byron St.*)

*Tuesday March 13th* — in NEW YORK CITY. BIRTHDAY DINNER. At the Hotel Pennsylvania.

For Program see page 274 of this week's *Nation*.


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# Books, Music, Plays

## To a Modern Girl

By WITTER BYNNER

Deep in old hearts, life lives again with green
Young shoots. Earth is now shedding the obscene
Interval, the decade of death, the darkness of war;
And heaven is vivid, as it was before,
With sun and heightened clouds and the small wings
Of a bird that so ecstatically sings
As to leave no part of the world unused to song.

Can you not feel that you as well belong
To the many other years beyond those few?
Shall even war have done this thing to you,
Given you only lust and no desire,
Made ashes of a heart that was never fire,
Turned you a mimic ape with an ape's grin
And an ape's cold fingers on a glass of gin?

## History by Analysis

*A History of English Literature.* By Emile Legouis and Louis Cazamian. Volume II: *Modern Times (1660-1914).* By Louis Cazamian. Translated from the French by W. D. MacInnes and the Author. The Macmillan Company. $5.

> The merely aesthetic plane in which the history of literature is usually placed tends to simplify overmuch our mental picture of the successive epochs, by neglecting to excess the secret differences within each age. A study of these differences helps one the better to understand the hidden connection between the periods, and the movement which makes them grow one from the other.

THIS sentence suggests in part the distinction of Professor Cazamian's approach, which has borne fruit in a literary history of remarkable philosophic depth and significance. Into the making of this book there enters a study and appraisal of all the currents of national life, philosophic, scientific, religious, political, social, and economic, for according to the writer it is the development of the national mind that supplies the clue by which the multiple phenomena of literature are to be organized. When one has ascertained the dominant moral and spiritual characteristics of a people, one will find that certain tendencies manifest themselves in accordance with a law of psychological rhythm. In the light of this rhythmic law English literature appears as "a succession of moments in the history of the English mind, each stage of which obeyed a craving for novelty and contrast, while consciously or unconsciously preserving the accumulated capital of all previous experiences." This determines a grouping of writers according to their psychological affinities rather than the traditional forms, the chief stress in the alternating rhythm falling on those mental attitudes which are commonly referred to as classic and romantic.

One may convey some notion of the refinement of analysis with which the leading principle is applied to the successive stages of literary history by an example or two. After defining the romantic spirit as "an accentuated predominance of the emotional life, provoked or directed by the exercise of imaginative vision," Professor Cazamian asks himself how the romanticism of 1820 differs from that of the Elizabethan Age, and his answer is that the former knows and feels itself to be a second period of its kind and is therefore "under the influence of feelings already experienced of a moral life which has formerly been lived, and which memory would fain recapture. This subtle impression of regret mingled with the joy of a discovery, this recognition of a land at once strange and familiar, where the heart finds itself at home, as it proceeds to explore it, impregnates all the fibers of English romanticism."

Professor Cazamian is even more interesting in his reflections on contemporary tendencies. After the dominance of the classical temper in Victorianism and the romantic reaction that followed at the end of the nineteenth century, the two factors seem to have become so involved and interpenetrated as to bring about an interruption, or at least a "relative stagnancy" in the normal psychological rhythm. Moreover, the modern writer, because of the wide diffusion of literary culture, the growth of self-consciousness, and the accessibility of all sorts of aesthetic doctrines, has no center of authority. "It has become so easy and natural a thing to express one's originality to one's self, and to draw up a program, that all beginners are, or want to be, original; all are leaders of some school or other; the result is that there is no longer any real school." An excessive mental saturation and sophistication as well as the absence of a central impulse would seem to threaten the vitality of contemporary literature. But, he adds, there is no need to assume that such a state will long continue and points to possible sources of renovation. Important changes in economic and social conditions, "the inflow of sap from the people," may bring with them new creative energies, and there may be important influences from abroad. "A limitless contact with the variety of earth and of races, and the internationalism of imagination, seem to be at the present time the main ways through which the need of a psychological renewal is seeking satisfaction in England."

This summary does scant justice to the comprehensiveness of Professor Cazamian's view or to the subtlety and acuteness of his intellectual discriminations. It is only meant to call attention to the kind of literary problems which occupy his mind and to the penetrating thought which he contributes to them. It is, as he himself says, a method which "makes large demands upon the attention of the reader, and involves the upsetting of not a few cherished habits," but we are ready to admit that the price is not too high "when balanced with the facilities which our desire not only to remember, but to understand, may find in an orderly array of a vast number of facts." In spite of the austere compression of its style, unrelieved by quotation and extremely economical of concrete references, this history is bound, by virtue of its coherent principles and judgments, to take first place with all thoughtful students of literature. We cannot but regret that a work which in such a remarkable degree unites splendid scholarship with fine psychological insight and artistic feeling should not receive a more worthy and attractive typographical form.

JACOB ZEITLIN

## Young China's Bible

*San Min Chu I: The Three Principles of the People.* By Sun Yat-sen. Shanghai: China Committee, Institute of Pacific Relations. $2.

THIS is the Bible of Chinese Nationalism, the gospel of Sun Yat-sen. Like our Western Bible, it is a mixture of profound wisdom and of naivete; its teachings rise sometimes from the hand-planted rice culture in which Dr. Sun was born, sometimes from the machine civilization of the West amid which he passed most of his life, and sometimes stumble between the two. There are as many sects in Chinese nationalism today as in Christendom; all bow before the name of the master, and each selects its favorite texts. Stern rulers find passages to

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justify their repression of popular movements; Communists draw from it their credo. As with our Bible.

It is easy to deride the man whose picture hangs in every Chinese student's room, and foreigners in China have done their best to picture the lifelong revolutionary who became China's first President, resigned in the interest of national union, reverted to revolution, and finally effected the Russo-Chinese alliance as an incompetent knave or a shallow dreamer. Yet Dr. Sun has continued to grow in the Chinese imagination; he is China's one twentieth-century national hero. Dead, he is a more powerful influence than he ever was alive, and these lectures, delivered at Canton in 1924, a year before his death, come as near to being a summation of his philosophy as anything he left behind him. (A more systematic manuscript was destroyed by fire in the civil war of 1922.) Only fragments had hitherto been translated.

The "Three People's Principles" are sometimes translated as "government of, by, and for the people"; sometimes as "liberty, equality, fraternity"; the words used here are "nationalism, democracy, and livelihood." Of the first of these we have heard most. China, Dr. Sun complains, is a "sheet of loose sand"; she lacks national cohesion. Sometimes he hopes that clan and family loyalty may be knit together into a national patriotism; sometimes, again, he seems to think that, as in Japan, they must first be destroyed. Certainly the destructive forces of railroads and revolution are combining to create a new set of loyalties. He has no use for provincial federalism; it seems to him a trick of local militarists. He wants a new national sense to wipe out foreign political and economic oppression, to build up industrial production, and to increase China's population so that she can continue to compete with the Western World. He predicts that America, because its population grew from ten to a hundred million in the last century, will have a population of one billion a century hence; and China must keep step.

These nationalist aspirations are vague enough, so that almost all politically minded China can agree upon them. At one point he suggests a boycott of all foreign activities—a refusal to buy foreign goods, use foreign banknotes, or to work for foreigners—but for the most part he sticks to safe general principles. On the principles of democracy and "livelihood" even his followers disagree. China, he thinks, has had too much individual liberty; she needs more of that discipline the lack of which, he says, caused the failure of the French Revolution. The young men who shout individual liberty to the sky are a peril to the national movement. Dr. Sun wants government to rest upon the people; but he wants the people to trust wise leaders. "Political democracy is not given to us by nature; it is created by human effort. We must create democracy and then give it to the people, not wait to give it until the people fight for it."

Here Dr. Sun's conflict between Confucius and Marx comes to light. He has the ancient Chinese faith in the leadership and example of the good ruler; yet he wanted to lead toward machinery and socialism. "Class war," he wrote, most un-Marxianly, "is not the cause of social progress; it is a disease developed in the course of social progress." "We can only make gradual changes in the capitalistic society; we must not try to overthrow it immediately." He even hoped to use "foreign capital to build up a future communist society in China"! Yet though his definition of "communism" was vague and unorthodox, and his faith in working-class organization slight, he had the Russian sense of economic realities. He saw, as few Westerners do, the importance of the land problem in China. "The capitalists in China with the largest incomes are still landowners, not machine-owners," he points out. Henry George as well as Karl Marx colored Dr. Sun's mind; and though his hope to "equalize landownership" by giving future increment in land value to the community seems to imply a stronger political organization than China is likely to have for decades, Canton city has paid for new roads by excess condemnation, and Chang Tso-lin finances railroads in Manchuria by building up new land values and selling at a profit.

"San Min Chu I" is a curiously abstract document to be a nation's bible. Dr. Sun loved to classify and simplify, to dwell upon the "three people's principles," the "four popular powers," the "four forms of economic progress," and "five administrative functions." Life is not so simple; it defies pigeon-holing; and China needs pragmatists who can adjust theory to unpleasant facts. Yet Sun obviously was a prophet with power to stir the Chinese people such as no other thinker of this century has had; the power of his patriotic example has been proved; and it will be interesting to see what the ferment of these confused, Confucio-Marxian ideas will do in the young generation which worships his memory. In him the Occident and Orient seem impossibly blended; but the mixture is no more curious than is the state of Asia in 1928.

LEWIS S. GANNETT

# Historian of Our Stupidity

*Prejudices, Sixth Series.* By H. L. Mencken. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

*Selected Prejudices.* By H. L. Mencken. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

IT is already too late to expect to find a new meaning in Mr. Mencken's significance to his contemporaries; he has been discussed too thoroughly for that. Yet it seems as if the concern of his critics for his immediate importance had made them overlook his true significance—his significance, as we might say in the argot of philosophy, seen under the form of eternity. Grant Mr. Mencken's rank as a stylist; for his eloquence occasionally equals in beauty and rushing euphony even Chapter LI, Book III of Urquhart's translation of Rabelais, and no American writer compares with him in his ability to get a new glitter out of a platitude. Grant also his importance as a crusader; for he has tried in his way to browbeat us into civilization with a laughter that has the abrasiveness of an emery wheel. Yet, important as are these aspects of his work, they can hardly be expected of themselves to enable him to survive. For certainly the fact that he has brought up a generation out of its diapers will not concern the future overmuch. Indications are not lacking already that his importance in this respect is very likely to be underrated, for some significance must be attached to the fact that a good many of his juniors have turned against him and a number of his disciples have repudiated him during the last few years. And exaggerated as this reaction no doubt is, there is in the complaint made of him a measure of reasonableness, for it is difficult to see what purposes he attaches to the freedom he fights for, or what vision guides him that would give a new orientation to the life he is blindly trying to improve. And as to his style, eloquent and mellow as it is—and it gains daily in the qualities that distinguish it, as these volumes attest—its ironic and satiric effects depend too much upon a mechanical formula of extravagant contrasts to remain fresh for long.

There is on the other hand an aspect of his work which must seem of secondary importance to us but which is bound to acquire a gradually increasing importance with time: its historical usefulness. This America which we are all trying to love and to understand—this weltering hodge-podge of sublimity and imbecility whose ugliness and beauty Sandburg and Frost have tried to sing, and Sinclair Lewis and Dreiser have tried to express; whose inevitable imperialistic tendencies our industrial Jeremiahs are in vain trying to arrest—this America has been loved and hated and misunderstood better by Mr. Mencken than by any of his contemporaries. For this reason his expression of it—or misexpression—possesses a partial yet permanent documentary usefulness that other contemporary expressions seem to lack. In this respect he is lightening the

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labor of the historians of the future. They will not have to search into the minutes of our chambers of commerce; they will not have to digest the contents of our tabloids; they will not have to read the dull chronicles of Lions and Rotarians. Mr. Mencken is doing all this for them; doing it better, more thoroughly, with a greater regard for form than they could ever do it themselves. Here lies the real meaning and true importance of his work. His "Prejudices," the researches into contemporary buncombe conducted under his editorship, his archives of contemporary imbecility, these are documents which the future historian of our post-war period will not be able to overlook, for the picture will not be complete without them. And here, too, lies Mr. Mencken's true originality and greatness. His labors as a pioneer American philologist cannot be held as important—since they must be soon superseded if they are to bear any fruit—compared with his originality as a historian. For he has invented a new form of history, the realistic history of contemporary stupidity; has carried that form to perfection; and has trained a school of followers who, though of course not as great as the master, aim at the same qualities which mark him off. And this he has done, it seems to me, without any hints from the past. For it would be to overleap common sense to charge him with borrowing his method from his notable predecessors of the fifteenth century, the Italian realists, especially Lorenzo Valla. Consider furthermore what we would give to possess a "Helleniana," or six volumes of Greek "Prejudices," to throw light upon the comedies of Aristophanes.

It is not necessary to point out that Mr. Mencken's competence for the job of historian of contemporary stupidity is due to a great extent to his consanguinity with it, to his innate and secret fondness for the things he satirizes. The coarse earthiness of his prose, its Rabelaisian peal—the very qualities which give it its pungency and its resilience—give him away too clearly. Besides, it is difficult to see how a truly civilized man should make it the object of his life to record the antics of barbarians. Certainly we do not see Havelock Ellis—whom Mr. Mencken has called the most civilized Englishman living—occupying himself with British stupidity. From this point of view Mr. Mencken is then as little civilized as the bible-belters whom he objurgates. And this is one of the reasons why he often seems unable to understand things lifted six inches above the coarse preoccupations of those he scorns: true religious sincerity for instance, poetry, philosophy. These things he often seems less able to understand than the claptrap of our pulpit baboons, the puerilities of revivalists, the idiotic literary criteria of judges turned literary censors. The latter are the things in which he is truly interested, and in which he truly revels, very much as Rabelais reveled, for similar reasons, in the idiocy of his day. And a good thing he does, too, for the ungrateful task he has set himself, to be performed at all, must be performed *con amore;* otherwise it would not have the documentary and archaeological value it now possesses.

ELISEO VIVAS

# Procopius of Palestine

*The Secret History of Procopius.* Translated by Richard Atwater. Chicago: Pascal Covici. $20.

BORN in Caesarea around the end of the fifth century A.D., Procopius fitted himself for the law and in his early twenties emigrated to Byzantium, then the capital of the Holy Roman Empire. Having abandoned his Samaritan faith in the interests of diplomacy, he became just enough of a Christian to flavor his writings with harmlessly edifying sentiments, and to pull a piously long face in the presence of Justinian during those moments when that myriad-minded emperor had ceased the wholesale slaughter of his subjects in order to feast upon the delectable mysteries of Christian metaphysics. During the everlasting wars that the empire waged against innumerable barbarians Procopius accompanied the great general Belisarius in the capacity of secretary and legal adviser. Fortune smiled so benignantly upon him that he was intrusted with even more important duties; and eventually he recorded the history of those wars he had witnessed—recorded them with relative impartiality and in a relatively dignified Greek idiom in an age that took far more interest in parasangs than in paradigms.

That his impartiality had been only relative, however, was soon made painfully clear to him. Justinian, whose countless avocations included a deep dislike of Belisarius, carefully noted that Procopius had lavished more praise upon the genius of that general than upon the virtuous endeavors of the emperor or of his spouse, Theodora, the former actress-courtesan. In some way that is not known but that was certainly very much to the point, Justinian made Procopius understand that his historical works did not please the royal rulers. The frightened fellow needed no further hint, for the mere thought of those dreadful palace dungeons made him shiver in his sandals; he therefore expeditiously undertook to worm himself back into royal favor by penning a sycophantic treatise that expatiated in glowing terms upon the wonders of the public buildings erected by the emperor and upon the unparalleled public and private virtues of Theodora. And Justinian, as susceptible to flattery as to the subtler allurements of mysticism, promptly rewarded his faithful subject by granting him permission to stitch upon the border of his toga the purple band that betokened the rank of a senator.

But a worm, even though a senator, will occasionally turn. Roused to a mighty though carefully concealed wrath on account of the indignities that had forced him to prostitute his talents, Procopius darkly meditated upon a worthy vengeance. Ah! He had it. He would write a Historia Arcana—a "Secret History" in which he would "retract what I have written before about the lives of Justinian and Theodora," and tell the unvarnishd truth about their almost incredible crimes. In odd moments between his rubber-stamp senatorial duties he wrote his book at a white—one might almost say a purple—heat. So virulent was his pen and so lurid his picture of bloody deeds, intrigues, and gaudy scandals within the Byzantine court that some grave historians have questioned the truth of his memoirs; but Gibbon, filled with unholy delight at this scathing portrait of a Christian court, did not doubt its general authenticity, though it is true that he shook his critical head dubiously over the statement that Justinian had achieved the death of a trillion human beings. And today also the work is commonly believed to be genuine, notwithstanding the many embellishments of fact and rhetoric that were added by a mind almost disordered by consuming indignation.

The present sumptuous volume, urbanely translated and edited by Mr. Atwater, is the first adequate as well as unexpurgated edition that has appeared in English. Among other things it makes clear that there never was any good reason why this exotic account of ancient Constantinople should have been subjected to editorial scissors; indeed, hardly a day now passes that does not see the publication of books which present far more explicit details concerning "the facts of life." What particularly strikes the modern reader, in fact, is that the charges levied against Justinian and Theodora are so general; for by far the greater part of the book is occupied with a vague and rather tedious denunciation of the royal couple. The material was doubtless there, but a Dumas rather than a Procopius was needed. Poor Procopius! Inflated with egregious conceit, he visioned future generations reading him with horrified amazement and delight; and yet very few people save some scant dozens of historians have dipped into his livid but rather prolix pages at all. Even this excellent but expensive edition must, unfortunately, remain caviar to the general.

R. F. DIBBLE

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# Books in Brief

*The Unknown Barnum.* By Harvey W. Root. Illustrated. Harper and Brothers. $4.

If there is anything "unknown" about Barnum, Mr. Root has not supplied the missing information. Instead he makes a serious, sentimental, and occasionally ungrammatical attempt to prove that Barnum was an authentic genius. Some millions of people have already suspected as much.

*Gallant Ladies.* By Cameron Rogers. With illustrations by Charles O. Naef. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

When Mr. Rogers wishes to convey the simple fact that one of his heroines led an undiscriminatingly lecherous career, he writes that she was "lost in the labyrinthine convolutions of an extremely alien personality." His effort to appear languidly sophisticated after the fashion of Thomas Beer results, in fact, in a style that is merely precious; and thus a book that contains very promising matter—for its subjects are not often gallant and never ladylike—simply fails to come off.

*In the Service of the King.* By Aimee Semple McPherson. Boni and Liveright. $2.

Mrs. McPherson's "Story of My Life" reads precisely like an unbroken series of tabloid headlines. No matter what she screams about—evolution, Voltaire, the Rock of Ages, faith cure for tuberculosis of the knee joint, or her exotic affair with kidnappers—her language has all the indefinable charm of a well-aimed brick.

*Red Rust.* By Cornelia James Cannon. Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

This is a romance of wheat. Matts Swenson, pioneer farmer in the New Sweden of Minnesota, has an Abraham Lincoln disposition and is considered queer because he burns the precious oil at night in order to read. The outlines of knowledge here find at last their most noble destiny: with the aid of a book entitled "Encyclopedia of All Knowledge, Complete in One Volume" and a copy of Darwin, Matts discovers the laws of selection and variation and succeeds in his life passion of breeding a superior crop of wheat which is rust-resistant. The human drama which runs parallel to this agrarian romance is obvious and colorless by comparison. An unpretentious, slow-moving tale, relieved by honest beauty in the description of the million meticulous details of nature by one who knows her Minnesota.

*The Bonney Family.* By Ruth Suckow. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

The slow, very carefully and tenderly told story of twenty years in the life of an Iowa family. Miss Suckow tempers her over-straightforward naturalistic technique with an occasional poetry; but the basis of her art is too sober, too humorless, too vigilant in its attempt to be "sympathetic" and "understanding" ever to be very moving. She succeeds perfectly in achieving the only possible apex of the school of American writers to which she belongs: to describe fully and completely and with an easy competence people who essentially are not worth the energy the artist expends upon them. The Bonney Family in their basic goodness, their slight charming eccentricities, their lack of dynamic power, their decency, and their inherent conventionality remind one disturbingly of the characters of Louisa May Alcott as seen by a mature temperament. Some of the pages indeed might almost have been lifted out of those sweet masterpieces of our childhood, "Jack and Jill," "Little Women," and "Little Men."

*The Story of Everest.* By Captain John Noel. Little, Brown and Company. $4.

The epic of Mount Everest is once more told, this time by the official photographer of the British expedition.


# Birthday Dinner

## OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

AND

# THE NATION

## HOTEL PENNSYLVANIA

## MARCH 13th, at 6.30 P. M.

TICKETS, $3.50 EACH

## Paul Robeson will sing

*Short Talks by*

| | |
|---|---|
| Judge Julian W. Mack | Rev. John Haynes Holmes |
| Heywood Broun | Florence Kelley |
| Fannie Hurst | Roger Baldwin |
| Carl Van Doren | James Weldon Johnson |
| Sidney Hillman | Freda Kirchwey |

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# Music

## Mr. Horowitz and Others

CRITICS are often warned against adverse criticism because it is "destructive." But what about the dangers of misused superlatives? Many a career has been nearly wrecked on just such a reef, as Mr. Vladimir Horowitz might testify. For over a year there had been a whispered rhapsody on this young man. He was unique, wonderful, MARVELOUS. He was "the outstanding piano genius of the rising generation." There was no one in the world like him. One could not ever *imagine* what he was like. "Just wait until you hear him," was always the mysterious climax. Well, one can accumulate a good many expectations when one has to wait for a whole year. By the time that Mr. Horowitz finally did arrive he had a mountain of superlatives to rise above and a fabulous reputation to sustain. To increase the handicap his debut with the Philharmonic was coupled with that of Sir Thomas Beecham's. It was not surprising, therefore, that this double responsibility proved too much for the high-strung young pianist, and that his *cheval de bataille*, the Tchaikowsky concerto, became literally a run-away war horse. It was a wild, crazed flight without rhythm or reason, ending in a terrific clash of octaves that brought down the house and saved the performer, but not the concerto. Afterwards Sir Thomas was blamed for not keeping pace. But I doubt if any conductor could have coped any better with such uncontrol. A successful appearance with another orchestra and in another work a few weeks later partially restored the pianist's morale.

Such suffering seemed as unnecessary as it was deplorable. Had Mr. Horowitz's exceptional gift been more frankly proclaimed and perhaps less importunately (for still another orchestral appearance followed the recital the very next night), he need have had no qualms about living up to it. That gift is technique. It is his to a phenomenal degree and it is also his curse. Based on a loud, clear tone obtained from the forearm, it has an extraordinary brilliance and clarity, like a pianola. Unfortunately, however, this method of production, important as it is for certain effects, is anathema to overtones, legato, and tonal variety. It reduces every emotion to black and white, and every intention to technic. One feels the desired feeling breaking through only to be swamped the moment it appears. Undoubtedly there is a great musical talent buried beneath this virtuosity. But one fears that Mr. Horowitz has been following a blind trail.

A less spectacular case of inflated valuation has been that of Béla Bartók, the Hungarian composer and pianist. Mr. Bartók's visit was heralded both before and after his appearances as that of the most "significant" modern composer in Hungary and one of the most "significant" in Europe. In fact, there was a good bit of indignation when his latest work, a piano concerto, was pushed aside by Mr. Mengelberg for an early "Rhapsody." Since then we have had the concerto and a good many others of Mr. Bartók's works. One cannot in all honesty say that they have added much to the cause for which he now stands. This cause, one must explain, is not the one for which he earned the right to be called significant. In fact, it is just the opposite; for Mr. Bartók until late years was laboring to arouse a national musical expression through reviving the national folk-tune. Now he seems to be trying to kill it by disguising these same tunes in modern dress. In his concerto he has abandoned the tunes altogether. The result is not pretty. Broken bits of themes are hammered out angrily on the piano and answered by equally angry blasts of the wind instruments. The only sustained motive is that of bitterness, and the sum total is unmitigated ugliness. Fortunately for Mr. Bartók, no one knows what it is all about. But unfortunately for us we are afraid to say so. HENRIETTA STRAUS

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# Drama

## The Oldest Profession

IN the symbolic prologue to Simon Gantillon's "Maya" (Comedy Theater) a sailor stands facing a girl in a peignoir. He, it appears, is looking for her—or any woman—and she for him—or any man. Then, after a few minutes, the curtain rises upon a mean chamber and there follow nine scenes from the life of a prostitute of Marseilles to whom come all sorts and conditions of men for comfort, for sympathy, or for forgetfulness. One brings her the night-dress of his beloved in which she is to wrap herself; another leaves to plunge into the ocean; another—a simple Norwegian sailor—to talk of his little sister far away; and still another to recognize in her the girl whom he had loved and lost in youth. But when the procession has passed and the day's work done she takes up her crocheting where she had left it, and she is only half aware that she is in her own poor self the Maya of the Hindus—the object of all desire reduced to its simplest terms, and made accessible to all who seek it.

Now, the idea for the play is one which any youthful playwright or any manager, young or old, would hail with delight, but it is also, I think, one which a little reflection will enable one to recognize as more immediately striking than likely to be genuinely fruitful. There is a class of subjects so simply, universally, and directly interesting that they nearly always defeat the purpose of the artist who would use them, and prostitution is one. Even if we disregard its scandalous piquancy and the fascination which it has for all those who have lived too correctly not to imagine sin as romantically delightful, the subject is at once too tremendous and too simple to lend itself to artistic elaboration. It is in one respect like Birth or Death considered by themselves, for there is nothing to say about it and attempts to say something in any sense adequate lead almost inevitably to bombast, to rhetoric, or to sentimentality. Almost without exception the prostitutes of the stage, unless they appear as persons rather than as types, are too vile or too noble or too something. The woman who happens to be a prostitute may be anything as a person, but The Prostitute as *Ding an sich*—she is too large and too vague. Before her men grow indignant or rhapsodical or maudlin, but they seldom grow clear or articulate. The audience may squirm, or gasp, or titter, and it may even mistake its ambiguous interest in the theme for an aesthetic emotion; but the truth of the matter is that it is merely very easily pleased by so illegitimately fascinating a theme.

M. Gantillon has chosen a method somewhere between realism and symbolism, for his people are rather too much generalized to be individuals, and the incidents which he has selected are obviously intended to represent the essence of what happens everywhere and all the time. Morover, he has idealized his prostitutes until they are something halfway between the common tart and the priestess, and he has treated the subject with a sort of taste which will inevitably lead various commentators upon things theatrical to remark how much more vulgar an American presentation of the subject would be. But though the difference is there, though "Maya," that is to say, is solemnly pretentious where most American attempts to treat such themes are stridently obscene, it may be questioned whether the difference is really important from any artistic standpoint. The one would smell to heaven, but the other, to my nostrils at least, reeks with perfume. "Maya" is not vulgar in our way but vulgar in another and more mincing fashion. It is subduedly melodramatic and tastefully bawdy, but not any the better for that, since, to my mind, it is merely sentimental and feeble.

Some of the performances, especially those by Aline MacMahon as the prostitute, Harold de Becker as the coal trimmer, and Marc Loebell as the gentleman with the nightgown, are extremely good if considered by themselves, but either the problem set by the form of the play is unsolvable or, at least, the direction has not solved it. Ernest Boyd has made the translation, which is very good.

George M. Cohan's domestic farce about nothing in particular called "Whispering Friends" (Hudson Theater) is, like its author's "Baby Cyclone," a very adroit farce written on the strictly American model. The reviewers were not appreciative, but the audience seemed to recognize the verisimilitude of the scenes in which the man and wife quarrel over nothing, and it rocked with laughter. Mr. Cohan is never able to give quite the polish to his dialogue for which he obviously strives, and his fashionable people seem always to speak an idiom which does not quite belong to them, but he has a humorous ingenuity

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which serves him almost as well in polite farce as it did in the days when he was writing his raucously patriotic folk-dramas.

"Hoboken Blues," the new play by Michael Gold, which has just been produced by the New Playwrights Theater, awakens in the breast of the spectator the same despair which he felt in contemplating the earlier offerings of the same group during the present season. That it has possibilities I would be the last to deny, but many of the roles are so hopelessly acted that one cannot even guess whether the author intended his Negro characters to be played realistically or in some style which the actors are powerless even to hint, and the play itself seems, like most of the group's other plays, so carelessly written and so disdainfully unrevised as to do itself a grave injustice. One suspects that the New Playwrights are altogether too easy on one another and that they gaily produce plays that have never in any real sense been written at all.

The week saw also two revivals, "Sherlock Holmes" (Cosmopolitan Theater) and "Our Betters" (Henry Miller's Theater). Neither is exactly a masterpiece, perhaps, but both have stood the test of time far better than most plays. The latter is certainly one of the very best of Maugham's comedies, and it is delightfully acted by Ina Claire.

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# International Relations Section

## The Polish Election

By WILLIAM ZUKERMAN

WITH the danger of a conflict with Lithuania eliminated at least for the time being, Poland has now plunged into a much bigger, even if less spectacular problem of its national life, that of the national election. The Polish Sejm has died a natural death, and was dissolved on November 29, after a stormy and checkered career of five years allowed by the constitution. Almost immediately the campaign for the new Sejm was started.

This is the first national election in Poland since the famous Pilsudski revolution of May, 1926, and it is therefore of unusual interest and importance. Whatever the Pilsudski revolution did or did not do it has surely swept away most of the old political parties, and has brought about a completely new alignment of forces in the country. Parties and leaders once the most powerful are now plunged in utter obscurity. Politically the country finds itself as after a real revolution.

To add to the complications, the Pilsudski revolution has introduced into politics a new political principle which no other country has as yet had to face. The revolution of May, 1926, was probably the most unique revolution of post-war times. It has destroyed, and at the same time it is attempting to uphold political democracy. One is not certain at the present moment whether Poland is now being ruled by a democracy or by a dictatorship. If it is the latter, then it is surely a dictatorship of a new kind. The very fact that the last Sejm died a natural death and that the country is now preparing for a quite normal election of a new Sejm shows that the Polish dictatorship is somewhat different in form than the now fashionable Fascist dictatorships in Europe. Whether good or bad, Pilsudski has introduced something original and new into politics. He is not a mere imitator. In certain respects, Poland, like Russia, is now experimenting politically.

The number and diversity of parties in Poland is so great (partly owing to the general European custom of many parties, and even more to the special Polish tendency to multiplicity of political opinions), that it is hardly possible to give an American public an idea of each party. As many as thirty-four parties appear on the list of state ballots at this election. The number of municipal parties is still greater. Warsaw alone has sixty-eight. Polish electors find it difficult to follow the programs and even names of their own parties. For this reason, Polish politicians usually deal, especially at election time, in party blocs rather than in individual parties. At any rate these blocs form the only unit which an American could go by in attempting to grasp the complex political situation of that country. At the present stage, not all the blocs are as yet formed, but all are sufficiently evolved to be classified.

There is, to begin with, the bloc of the Right parties, or as it is called, the National Catholic Bloc. The moving spirit of this bloc is the old, once powerful reactionary Narodowa Democratic Party (Endetzia, for short), which was the leading party of the country before the Pilsudski upheaval. That party is now almost obliterated, although its spirit is not altogether dead. Whatever is left of it is now attempting to form the Catholic bloc which, if it could realize all of its original plans, would have controlled a formidable group in the next Sejm, for the religious appeal is still very strong in Poland

But these plans were spiked from the very beginning by the clever manipulation of the government forces, which, by a stern warning to the clergy and a veiled threat of separation of church from state, succeeded in eliminating the religious appeal from all party platforms. Extreme Polish nationalism, which is the only policy that the bloc has left now, will hardly satisfy the various interests of all the parties concerned, who range from the so-called Polish Monarchists to the "Piast," a party of peasants and small landowners, once regarded as belonging to the moderate Left. In fact, a split in the Catholic bloc already seems unavoidable. Besides the tendency in Poland, as well as in the rest of Eastern and Central Europe, is now more to the Left. One may therefore confidently predict that the country is in no danger of a return of the old reactionary rule of the Right, apart from the fact that, if such an event were to take place, the dictatorship which once swept away such a regime from office by force of arms would almost certainly not permit its return while it has all the power of the government in its possession.

On the Left there is the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.) which is still the strongest of the old parties in Poland, but the Communists have made big inroads into the ranks of the city workers. Although the Communists are legally forbidden in Poland, and cannot stand at an election, they will nevertheless appear on the ballots under another name. To counteract this danger, the Socialists are now planning a Left bloc with a number of other smaller parties, chiefly the Left Peasant Party (of which M. Thugut was leader).

The most formidable group is that attached to the Government, the Bartell-Pilsudski Party, or the "Sanatzia," as it is popularly called (after Pilsudski's May slogan, the restoration to health of national affairs in Poland). This group controls the biggest press of the country, is largely in possession of the government machine, and has the strength of a ruling party. Its chief asset is the prestige of Pilsudski towering behind it. It is rather interesting that Pilsudski himself has so far failed to attach himself publicly to any party or to take an active part in the campaign. He either wishes to remain above parties or desires the election to go through without any coercion, even moral, from his side. But it is generally known that the "Sanatzia" expresses his personal wishes, and serves as his political tool. This party has made an alliance with the new Conservative Party of big landowners and manufacturers, also formed under the influence of Pilsudski, and the group correspondents to the German Center. Its program is still that of the May revolution, "the restoration to health and moral cleansing of internal affairs" and efficient administration. It is expected to control the next Sejm.

No political situation is complete in Poland without the national minorities which form political parties and blocs of their own. One-third of the population of Poland consists of non-Poles, chiefly Ukrainians in Galicia, White Russians in White Russia, Jews, Lithuanians, and Germans. They are all known under the general name of minority nationalities, and they form a considerable element in Polish

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politics. At the present writing the various minority nationalities have formed a bloc of their own as they did at the last election, five years ago. But the condition of the minorities in Poland has changed during the last five years, and the aspect of the bloc has changed as well.

Five years ago the minorities were fighting a most reactionary and outspokenly anti-Semitic and nationalistic government. The present regime is probably not less nationalistic than the previous one, but it shows signs of a desire to come to an understanding with the minorities. This is especially true in the case of the Jews. Compared to the persecution of the old Endek regime, the present condition of the Jews in Poland is greatly improved. The marshal himself is probably one of the best friends of the Jews in Poland, and his administration, under his own premiership and that of Professor Bartell, cannot be accused of lack of good-will and friendship toward Jews. The edge has been taken off the Jewish opposition to the government, and consequently the enthusiasm of the Jews for the minorities bloc has diminished. Three of the most important Jewish parties have refused to join the bloc. Similarly the strongest White Russian party, the Harmada, has not joined the bloc, nor have the left Ukrainian parties. So that the minorities bloc has much less chance of success than it did five years ago.

Such is the general outlook of the parties at the present moment. The people seem to exhibit less interest in the election than five years ago. This is partly due to marked disappointment in parliamentary action in general. The previous Sejm was a failure in every respect. The terrible economic crisis in Poland has not been solved, and is still the most important problem of the new nation. Almost every act of national importance in Poland occurred outside of, and often in opposition to the Sejm. Political parties, and especially leaders, are thoroughly discredited. With the exception of Pilsudski there is not a single popular figure in Polish public life. The country seems to be hovering between belief in parliamentary institutions and hero worship. A portion of the more liberal Pilsudski press is attempting to create some sort of union between these two, a fusion of the principles of democracy with those of an enlightened, somewhat liberal dictatorship. But the fusion is so far as vague and indefinite as the entire Pilsudski experiment, and all speculation about it is entirely premature.

# Where China Conquers

By D. M. FRASER

*Singapore, January 8*

THE boarding officer was complaining bitterly. "It's the most filthy job you could imagine. I handle thousands and thousands of coolies coming in from China. Do you realize that Singapore is the greatest immigration station in the world next to Ellis Island? And these hordes pour in—diseased, dirty, and incredibly ignorant—always fighting quarantine rules. They come in herded like cattle on the steamers, but only too glad to get away from crowded China." And the talk went on in the white man's club where the silent-footed servants are the only Asiatics admitted.

The ruling race is becoming vaguely uneasy in the great rubber and tin lands of Malaya. For from the shores of the Gulf of Siam to the remotest corners of Borneo and throughout the vast areas of the Dutch East Indies these newcomers spread. They are the laborers who built Penang's magnificent mountain railway. On their patient shoulders is borne the burden of rubber plantation life. Without them ships could not be unloaded. The English rely on them for house servants and the government offices use the second generation as clerks.

But it is as merchants, traders, and contractors that the Chinese most significantly dominate the lands to the south of their own country. The coolie of yesterday becomes the hawker or small shopkeeper of today. He toils unbelievably long hours and with his family and assistants dwells in one miserable mat-shed. The natives revile him as an extortionist but they insist on having cheap and gaudy European trash and become his needy debtors. The lordly "tuan," the masterful white man, scorns Oriental haggling and receives the servility he desires; but pays the yellow man's prices.

The coolie's son becomes a "towkay," a substantial merchant and capitalist. He uses the telephone and on occasion wears European clothes. He may have an automobile; his children go to school and speak English. He is not a "tuan," but he is one of the wealthy men of his adopted country, he has his finger in every speculation, and he could probably buy and sell half the whites in the place.

In Penang the houses of the Chinese millionaires are among the sights of the city, and a leading Singapore paper recently referred to the fact that among the richest men of the world can be numbered some dozen of the Chinese citizens of that capital. Their enterprise has set up automobile concerns in every town of any size in Malaya. The cinema is another of their favorite investments. Wherever profit can be made they are to be found, energetic and adaptable. There is nothing of the "unchanging East" about them. The younger clerks and towkays drop the religious superstitions of their nation; their womenfolk move about freely and drive in the family car as much as the men do.

What the colonial governments dread most in this vast population of Chinese is their clannishness. They protect one another; they conceal fugitives from the eyes of authority. A "coolie row" is the *bête noire* of every magistrate. In spite of the constant influx, labor is scarce; wages are rising and with them the spirit of independence. It is easy enough to crush a Malay outbreak—a moment's flash and fury; but a Chinese strike or boycott is different. Bullying words may stiffen resistance, and to employ armed force is to face a chain of consequences which may have a remote and terrible ending.

Secret societies are strictly forbidden from Kuala Lampur to Batavia. Men remember the insurrection in Sarawak a century ago which led to a surprise attack and the occupation of the capital. Are these societies extinct in Chinatown? It matters little, since innumerable clubs exist openly. The leading citizens are, of course, "loyal" because prosperous and accept titles and places on councils. But they correspond with their mother country and never fail to help in moments of national disaster. Other peoples have built up empires in these lands; centuries ago the Chinese Empire had power in Borneo.

The European is already outclassed as a trader. When he loses his slight technical superiority, who will then be lord of Malaya?

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